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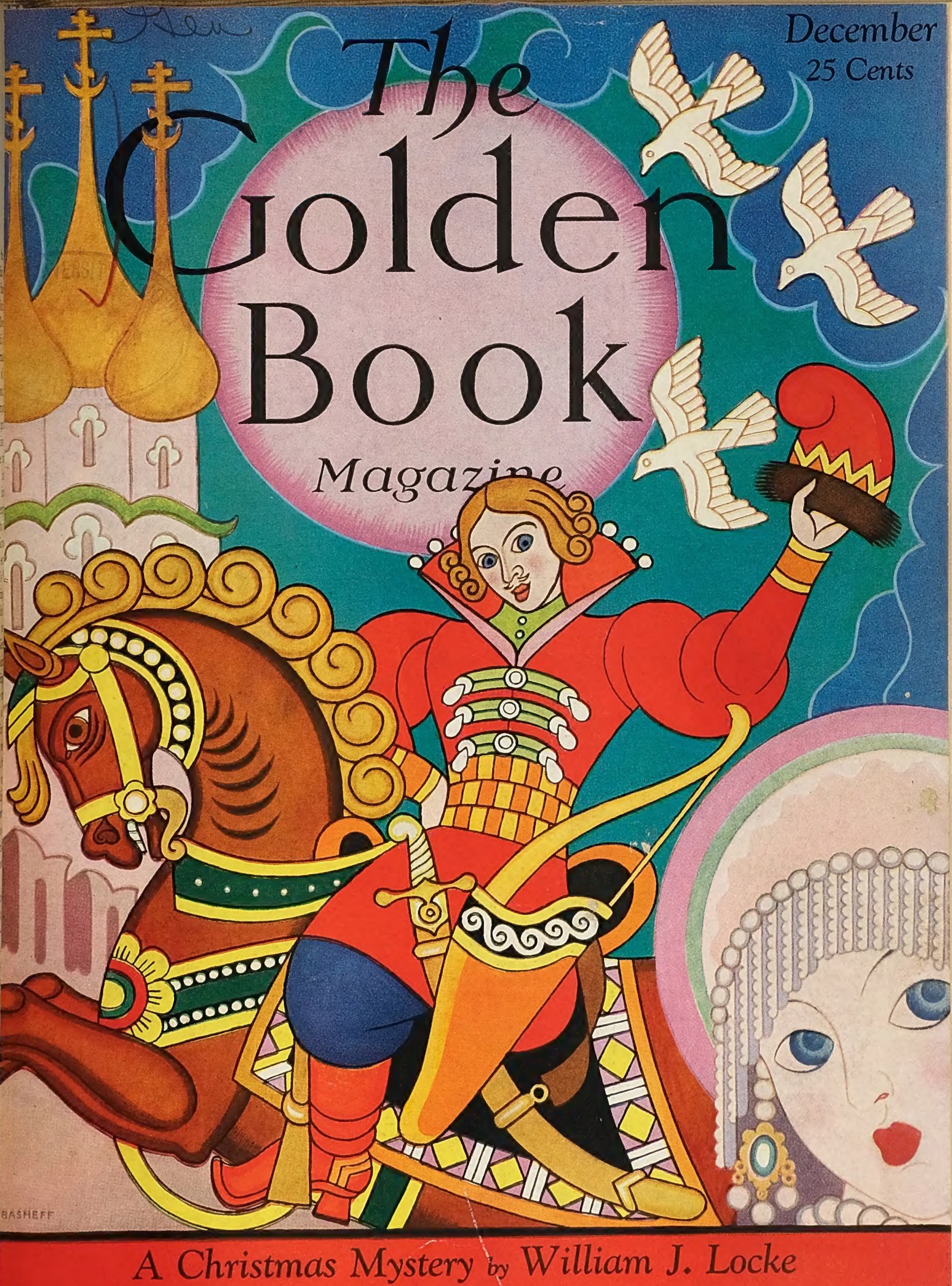
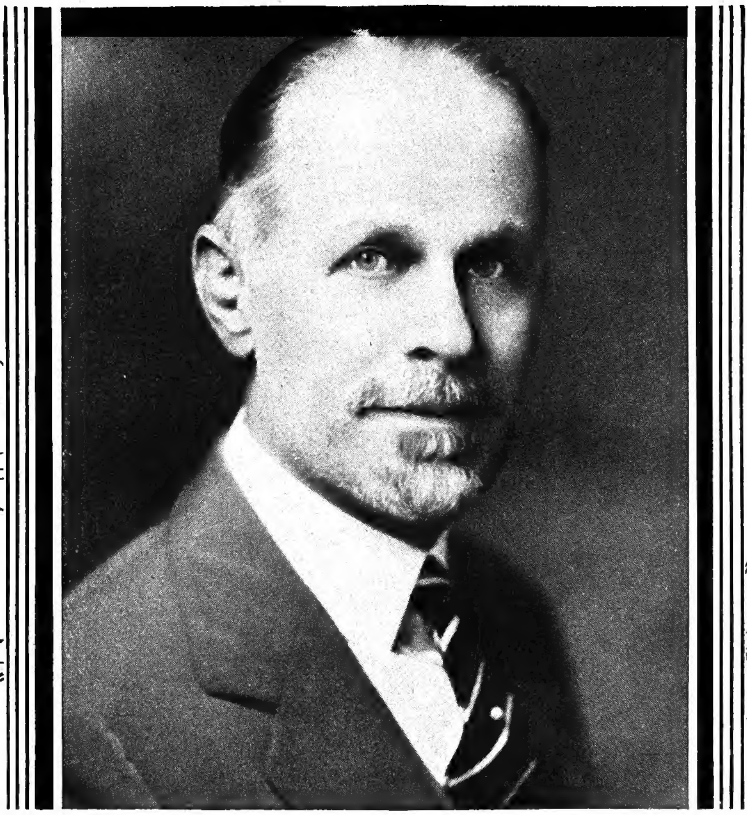


A Christmas Mystery by William J. Locke

Charles Dickens — Stephen French Whitman — Henry James — Jonas Lie
William Rose Benét — James Stephens — F. Anstey — Washington Irvi



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FREDERICA FIELD, *Literary Editor* RALPH ROCKAFELLOW, *Art Editor*

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Who's Who *in the* Golden Book

A fanfare of colour and gaiety, a bubbling of all that is most child-like and nicest in the world, heralds the real Christmas season for us, and apparently for Boris Artzybasheff, who has designed our cover. A gayer, more irrepressible, more provocative cover we have not seen in a long time, though we say it of our own magazine who shouldn't.

Mr. Artzybasheff is obviously a Russian, and here is the vividness and lightness and child-like humour of his race. Yet he has also done a little bit of what Dickens did in catching the Christmas spirit of all races. Dickens' writings about Christmas—sound and sweet and jolly—have become so inextricably mixed up with all our feelings for the season that we could not present this Christmas time without at least the memorable party given by the Fezziwigs.

* * *

> I count myself a Locke man. If I can't borrow a new novel by him, I buy it. I do so because I know that I shall have entertainment, that I shall mix with people of breeding whether they be low born or high born, people with ideas and ideals, who behave themselves, and who take it for granted that there is something more in life than getting and spending. . . . He is a man of feeling, his books are debonair, and if he deals sometimes with sad things, he does so with an air, showing us that, as in life, they pass; and that good may issue from them. . . . He is a cheerful writer, one who pursues the *mot juste* with a lilt, and who delights to turn a phrase happily.
>
> C. Lewis Hind.

William J. Locke's "Christmas Mystery" is not only a charming Christmas story; it would be engrossing at any time of the year. Locke can gambol with more abandon in his writing than here, but he has not often been more simple, straightforward, and tender. And a good plot is always the groundwork of a Locke creation.

Locke is an Englishman who dislikes cold water, tea, and all exercise, and who, at fifty-nine, is tall, thin, distinguished-looking. He began his writing at night, while he was Secretary to the Royal Institute of British Architects. Following the overpowering success of *The Beloved Vagabond* in 1906 he resigned from his post to devote all his time to writing, but he still works almost exclusively between ten P. M. and one A. M. The day he spends in living.

Fourteen novels preceded *The Beloved Vagabond,* and almost as many have followed it. There are *Septimus* and *Stella Maris* and *The Morals of Marcus Ordeyne, Jaffery, The Wonderful Year, The House of Beltazar, The Mountebank, The Tale of Triona, The Golden Adventure of Mr. Paradyne, The Great Pandolfo, The Fortunate Youth, The Joyous Adventures of Aristide Pujol, The Rough Road* and many more, nearly all of which we remember somewhat vaguely, but with a warm little feeling of fondness. They have charm and sincerity, a lightness of serious touch, irony, and that rare thing, sentiment without sentimentality.

* * *

Much of the December Golden Book hangs by a match-stick. There is something peculiarly dramatic about a single match, and both G. B. Mackenzie and Viola Paradise have known how to make the most of this in their two widely-different stories in this issue. Mr. Mackenzie tries a soul by means of one of the pesky, inconsiderable things. Miss Paradise hangs two lives in the balance against a necessary match, which assumes proportions gigantic enough almost to outweigh them.

Both Mr. Mackenzie and Miss Paradise can tell a good story. Their knowledge of human nature is shrewd, and they are not above having plenty of action in their tales. We cannot tell you much about Mr. Mackenzie. He is the Scotchman his name promises, in spite of the life-like Frenchiness of his story. He has written numerous short stories, is an Oxford man, served in the World War, and has since then spent much time in France. When he is in Scotland he lives at Grangehill, Beith, Ayrshire.

Viola Paradise is a Chicagoan, whose first literary efforts bore such titles as "Child Labour and the Work of Mothers in the Oyster and Shrimp Canning Communities of the Gulf Coast" and "Maternity Care and Welfare of Young Children in a Homesteading County in Montana." These were only one product of a job as special agent of the United States Children's Bureau. The other result was a knowledge of life and people which gives body to all she writes. Lewellyn Jones has voiced the following appreciation of her: "The fact that she writes interesting stories, with plots and with plenty of humour, should not blind us to the fact that she is a most sensitive and deep-seeing observer of what goes on in the hearts of normal people." "Matches," in this issue, has great human appeal.

* * *

A short man with the head of a drolly-wise gnome is the most perfect combination of whimsy and poetry and caustic-kind philosophy that we know. There are few authors with whose books we would rather spend an evening than James Stephens; fewer still whose books we would rather have written. For you would not only be a very delightful person if you had written those books, but one who had derived fun and sense from life.

James Stephens was born in Dublin in 1882; his education was scanty, his wanderings were many. While he was still very young he went to work in a lawyer's office. "But it was not much work that I did," he says of himself. "I thought in those days

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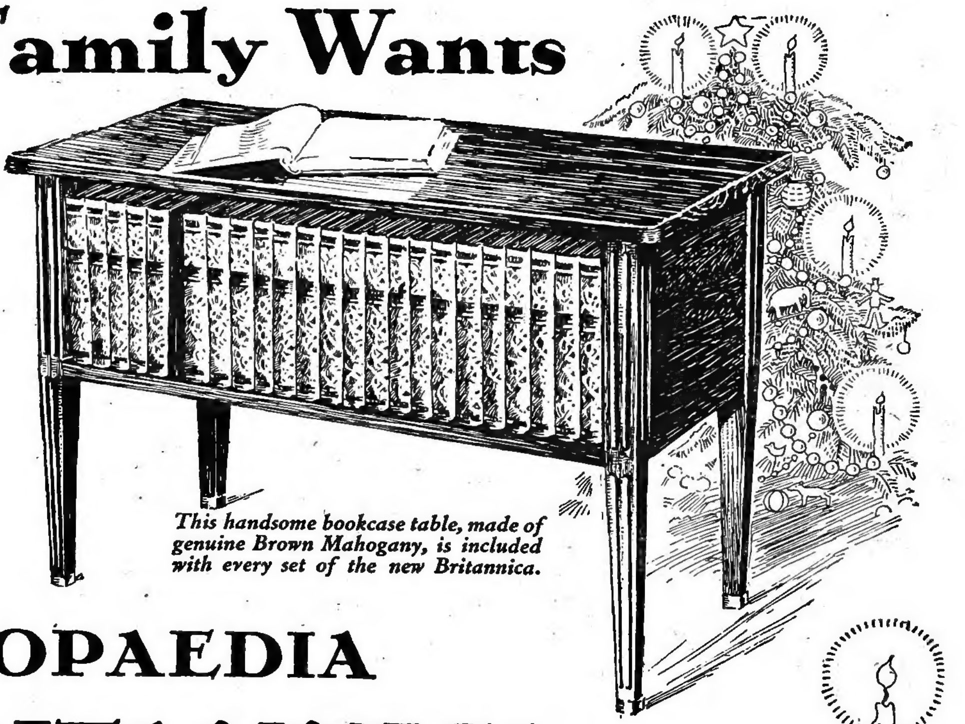

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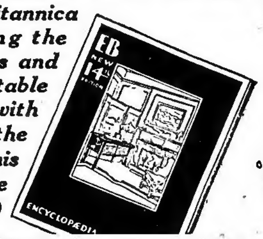

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that maybe I'd be a poet. All day I used to sit and think about big words. By 'big' I mean fine, high-sounding words like 'honour' and 'noble' and 'courage,' and I spent most of my time scribbling them down." "Æ." (George W. Russell), the great Irish poet, was the first person to be convinced of the boy's talent. Under his encouragement a couple of books of verse were published, and a series of papers appeared in a Dublin paper which, later collected and amplified as *The Crock of Gold,* brought him his first wide recognition and the Polignac Prize for the best book of the year. "If I were giving prizes to myself," said Stephens, "I should certainly hand at least six gold medals, each as big as a tub, to *The Demi-Gods,* and I should give twenty-six bigger and better medals to the *Irish Fairy Tales. Deirdre* and *In the Land of Youth* are too recent for me to say much about them, but I will agree with anyone that a medal twice as big as a door would not half— However, you will gather that I approve of my own books; they are my favourite reading while I am writing them." John Cowper Powys has declared truly as follows:

> What is so fascinating about James Stephens' work is that he uses the quaint, original, dialect expressions derived from the Irish peasantry to pour forth a certain drastic but not altogether disillusioned philosophy of his own. . . . What most separates him from Irish writers of the day is a mingling of direct, almost Dickensian humour with the poetic sense of beauty of the Celt. His fairy stories, *The Crock of Gold, In the Land of Youth,* and *Irish Fairy Tales,* differ entirely from the work of Colum and W. B. Yeats, of Synge and "Æ.," in the fact that with the imaginative poetry there comes a bitter after-taste. . . . In both Stephens' poetry and prose there is a universal human quality, acrid, astringent, saturnine, which gives a certain weight and beauty to his Irish fancies.

* * *

Along with Ibsen and Björnson, Jonas Lie stands as one of the grand old men of Norwegian literature. All three were schoolmates at Oslo (then called Christiania) about the middle of the nineteenth century, and by 1874, although Ibsen was not yet recognized, Björnson and Lie were competing for first place among Norwegian novelists.

Lie wrote stories of the arctic Norwegian seacoast for the most part: minute, realistic studies, strongly flavoured at times with mysticism. There is a folk-tale quality about many of the shorter things, such as "Elias and the Draug"—a profound understanding of the people about whom he wrote, combined with simplicity of telling, and an unquestioning, child-like faith in such things as trolls and draugs.

Lie's best work was perhaps the writing done close to his own early experience of wild arctic seafaring, as in *The Visionary* (from which "Elias and the Draug" is taken), or *The Pilot and His Wife,* the novel which definitely established his fame. His later works, *The Family at Gilje, The Commodore's Daughters, A Wedded Life,* and others, were vivid and careful pictures of the professional class to which he belonged (he had begun his career as a lawyer); they remind us of the novels of Mrs. Gaskell in their vividness of detail and their quiet charm. Lie spent much of his life abroad, in Dresden, Stuttgart, and Paris, but at length returned to Oslo, where he died in 1908.

In "The Woman from Yonder," Stephen French Whitman has written a superb romance. It is warm with reality and emotion, and rich with the flavour of the unknown which most every-day-just-like-the-nexters need to keep their imaginations in working order. Whitman is an old Golden Book favourite anyway, but "The Woman from Yonder" stands out, even among his best.

Mr. Whitman has Philadelphia, Princeton, and the New York *Evening Sun* in his background, as well as the books of fiction, *Predestined, The Happy Ship, The Isle of Life, Children of Hope,* and *Sacrifice,* and any number of successful moving picture scenarios. And he is not yet fifty years old.

* * *

Washington Irving's genial shadow stands gracefully at the portals of American literature—that of the first American author to be recognized abroad. Much of his writing was not even done in or about America; yet in a handful of stories in which he caught the tradition of the Dutch settlers in New York, and in some of his biographies, he made sincere use of this new material as only a few American authors of his time had done.

Irving's first important literary venture was his *History of New York from the Beginning of the World to the End of the Dutch Dynasty,* by "Diedrich Knickerbocker," published in 1809. Irving had been born in New York twenty-five years before, and had studied there for the bar. The book was a pleasant jumble of legend, satire, droll commentary, and characterization—less polished than his later work, but more effervescent and robust. It was instantly popular, and when Irving visited England later he was greeted with warm curiosity as the first celebrated American author. Soon, by reason of his own charm and distinction, he was accepted unanimously by London's literary world. *The Sketch Book* (1819), written and published in England, was immensely popular on both sides of the Atlantic. Here was kindly observation, mellowed satire in the pattern of England's well-loved Addison; here also, in some of his legends and tales, was more of the source material of later American literature.

In 1824, after the appearance of *Bracebridge Hall* and *Tales of a Traveler,* Irving left England for Spain. During a five-year visit he gathered material for four books: his *History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus,* his *Voyages and Discoveries of the Companions of Columbus, A Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada,* and *The Alhambra.* After a few years as secretary of the American legation in London, Irving returned to America. He had been gone seventeen years, and he found that during his absence his name had become a household word. A trip through the west resulted in his *Tour of the Prairies,* and then he settled down on the old Van Tassel farm at Tarrytown, just above New York City, on the Hudson River. Here he continued to write, with versatility but diminishing vigour, a series of histories and biographies, including *Astoria,* a history of the fur-trading settlement founded in Oregon by his friend John Jacob Astor; *The Adventures of Captain Bonneville,* an early American explorer; a Life of Goldsmith and one of Mahomet. After four

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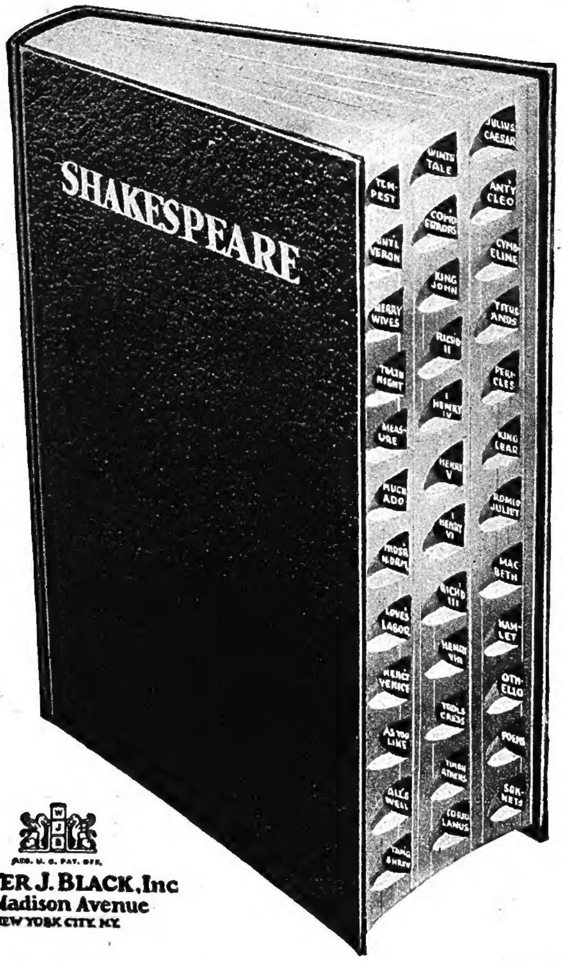

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more years spent abroad as Ambassador to Spain, Irving returned to his farm and his last literary task—a gigantic and never very successful life of Washington in five volumes. He died in 1859, just after its completion. Irving was a master of easy, graceful English; his humour was broad and good-natured; his ability to tell a story was unexcelled. "The play of thought and sentiment and language; the weaving in of characters, lightly yet expressively delineated; the half-concealed vein of humour that is often playing through the whole—these are among what I aim at," Irving himself wrote. And he was successful. Much from his pen was perhaps too smoothly successful in these superficial attractions, and is already being forgotten. But a tale like "The Spectre Bridegroom" satisfies the universal human love for a good story, and will no doubt live happily ever after.

◆

A PARTICULARLY INTERESTING literary discovery for many GOLDEN BOOK readers is that by Richard Garnett of a long-lost Dumas manuscript, half-diary, relating his adventures *On Board the "Emma,"* the yacht which Dumas purchased in a characteristic gesture of extravagance. The volume, a handsome one of more than five hundred pages, has just been published, and is further reviewed in this issue.

The GOLDEN BOOK is to have its own Dumas discovery. Since early last summer, Mr. Garnett, who is a foremost Dumas authority and a brilliant translator, has been at work on a story by the great Frenchman which will appear for the first time in English in the GOLDEN BOOK. It is a combination of historical romance and personal memoir, charming as only Dumas can be charming, and we are eager to present it to our readers. As yet, however, we do not know quite when it will be ready.

◆

THOMAS ANSTEY GUTHRIE, otherwise "F. Anstey," is a cherished fun-maker of the '80s whose salted almonds of wit ("not provided as articles of nourishment, but rather to beguile the intervals between the courses of a substantial banquet") have lost none of their crispness and flavour.

Anstey started his career in London as a lawyer, but the publication of *Vice Versa,* a farce written for his own amusement, turned him over night into a successful author. Since then, some thirty volumes have appeared, in addition to a department, "Voces Populi," in *Punch,* which was a favourite with the public for many years. Some of the best-known of his gentle fooleries are *The Black Poodle, The Tinted Venus, The Brass Bottle, Love Among the Lions, The Man from Blankley's,* and *Salted Almonds,* from which "The Game of Adverbs" is taken. There are novels, collections of short stories and dialogues, and plays.

Incidentally, if you have never tried the game on which Mr. Anstey's plot is based, we recommend it as good house-party entertainment.

◆

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT is a distinguished poet and editor whose occasional humorous essays, fresh and intimate, seem the careless combustions of his own personality. Take, for instance, "But Once a Year," where the fooling is easily delightful in a way that more professional humour finds it hard to achieve.

Mr. Benét was born at Fort Hamilton, New York, in 1886. He graduated from Yale in 1907, and spent the next two years as a free-lance writer in California. Then for seven years, until he joined the U. S. Air Service during the War, he was on the staff of the *Century Magazine.* Following his war discharge he dipped momentarily into the advertising business, and edited a business periodical; later became associate editor of the New York *Evening Post's* literary review; and in 1924 one of the founders and editors of the *Saturday Review of Literature,* where he is still to be found.

He has published a half-dozen books of poetry: *Merchants from Cathay, The Falconer of God, The Great White Wall, The Burglar of the Zodiac, Moons of Grandeur, Wild Goslings,* and *Man Possessed;* a novel, *The First Person Singular;* a story for children, *The Flying King of Kurio,* and innumerable critical studies and reviews.

◆

> Fanny felt now that she couldn't have interrupted him for the world. She found his eloquence precious; there was not a drop of it that she didn't, in a manner, catch, as it came, for immediate bottling, for future preservation. The crystal flask of her innermost attention really received it on the spot, and she had even already the vision of how, in the snug laboratory of her afterthought, she should be able chemically to analyze it. There were moments, positively, still beyond this, when, with the meeting

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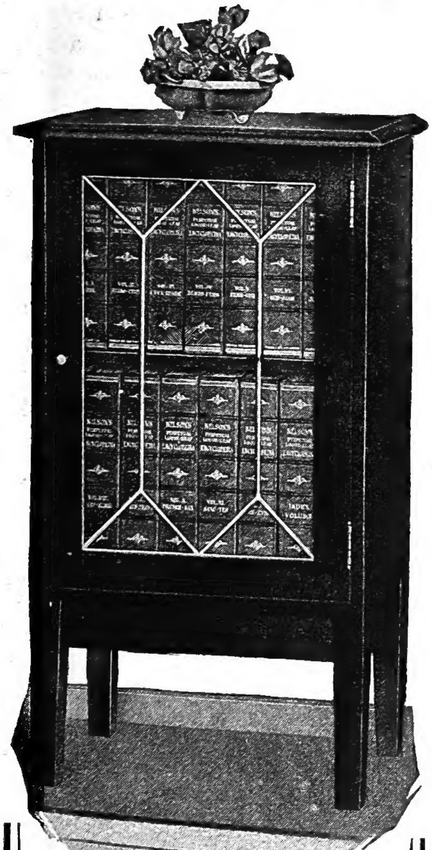

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> of their eyes, something as yet unnamable came out for her in his look, when something strange and subtle and at variance with his words, something that *gave them away,* glimmered deep down, as an appeal, almost an incredible one, to her finer comprehension. What, inconceivably, was it like? Wasn't it, however gross, such a rendering of anything so occult, fairly like a quintessential wink, a hint of the possibility of their really treating their subject—of course on some better occasion—and thereby, as it were, finding it much more interesting.
>
> HENRY JAMES

"Like a hippopotamus trying to pick up a pea," Henry James laboriously yet delicately strives in his writing to present every nuance of the psychological problems which preoccupy his characters. It was the same in his conversations; always anxious to define his meanings to their fullest, he spoke with a hundred hesitations, clauses, and asides, until his anxious hearers despaired of his ever finding his way back to the long-forgotten verb.

But it was significant of James that both his hearers and readers were respectfully patient. Undoubtedly some persons avoided talking to him, and they avoid reading him. But for the Henry James enthusiasts—and there are many—the compensations are great. He is a unique detective of the mind, who traces each smallest clue to its end, and then pieces together the findings into an amazingly complete analysis of the situation. He furnishes his characters' minds to the minutest detail, in sentences which have ripened to their fullest and richest.

Henry James was an American and a Puritan who chose to live all his life in voluntarily exile abroad, believing that no one could produce literature in the echoing emptiness of this new country, with its silent past and confused present. Vitality aroused no admiration in him.

He lived his life among cultured, leisured people, and wrote about them and their psychological relationships with subtlety and grace—but not vigour. His father had been a Swedenborgian, a philosopher and a writer; his brother was William James, one of the first and greatest of American psychologists. Following college years at Harvard, and a few early contributions to the *Atlantic Monthly,* he sped back to Europe; there he had spent many impressionable years as a boy, reading the French realists—Zola, Flaubert, Maupassant, Daudet—from whom his art, transformed by his own abnormal subtlety, took so much.

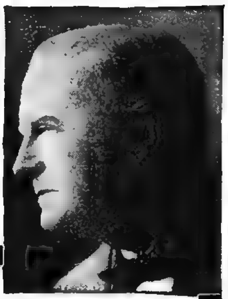
His books appeared regularly and in great profusion, evolving from the more straightforward, simple manner of *A Passionate Pilgrim* and *Roderick Hudson* to the complicated involutions of *The Golden Bowl* or *The Wings of the Dove.* Only a few of them dealt exclusively with the American scene; his favourite subject was the American girl transplanted to European ground.

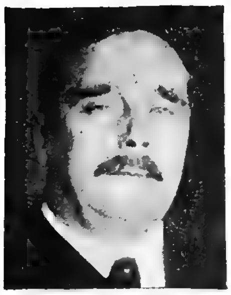
Henry Seidel Canby
Chairman

Heywood Broun

Dorothy Canfield

Christopher Morley


William Allen White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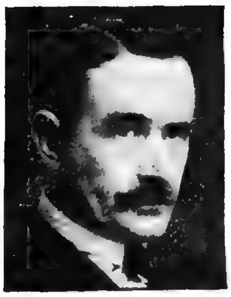
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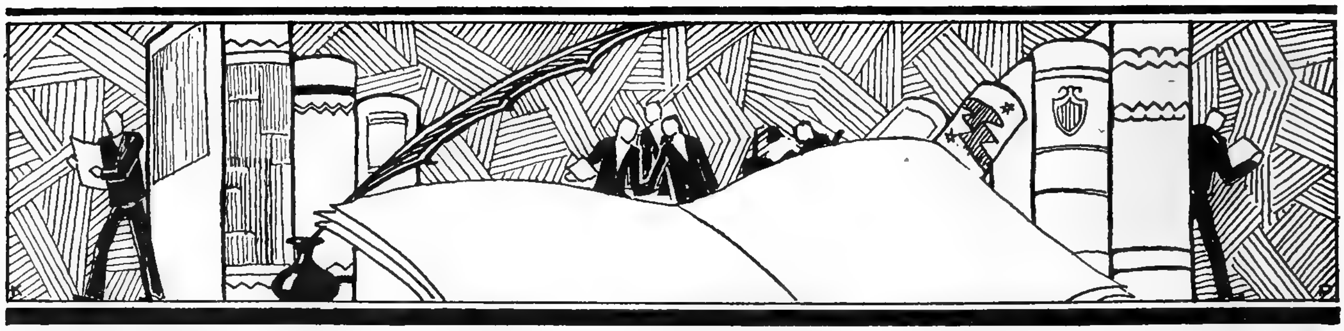

Authors and Books

CONSIDER AS SAID all the usual things about Christmas and Aunt Jane's present. . . . We wouldn't bring it up at all, except that, what with more books published this fall than ever before in the history of the Weather Bureau, the conscientious book-buyer, unaided, might never get out of the bookshops by Christmas. . . . Take novels, for instance: here are more than we have room to mention that we must specially recommend. . . .

NOT FOR A LONG TIME have we read a novel which moved us so deeply as *A Farewell to Arms* (Scribner). . . . As a war book, it affected us less than others of the kind; even as a novel it seems to us, in retrospect, lacking in sustained power; but as a love story, pure and simple, it tore at our sympathy as keenly—probably more keenly—than if the story had been the real one of intimate friends. . . . Because of Mr. Hemingway's uncanny power of portraying character in dialogue, in action, in every turn of events, we know his two central characters better than we know our friends. . . . Most of the early part of the book we do not find worth re-reading. . . . But the movie-scenario quickness of the Italian retreat, and the scenes which bring the love of Catherine and Henry toward completeness are nearly perfect, and will stand re-reading and re-reading—we have tried it. . . . This story is far simpler in outline and wider in scope than *The Sun Also Rises;* the hero is a sensitive, likable, sane young man driving an ambulance on the Italian front. . . . His life with his companions, and with the nurse with whom he falls in love while flirting with her; his desertion to Switzerland with her, the ripening of their companionship and its tragic ending make the slender outline of a plot, kept alive by occasional bursts of action and a beautiful rhythm of emotion. . . . The war does not do the devastating things to Henry and Catherine that it did to the characters of Hemingway's earlier novel. . . . Mr. Hemingway himself, we venture to think, has changed, has refound some meaning in life. . . . His unique literary method of inserting bodies and souls into everyday conversations, and reporting the workings of the mind with the ease of a court stenographer taking dictation, is amazing. . . . Out of commonplaces, crudities, inarticulateness, Mr. Hemingway has created a story of lyric beauty. . . .

IT IS NOT EVERY AUTHOR who can impale a character and a social stratum as neatly on the sharpness of her observation as can Anne Parrish. . . . *The Methodist Faun* (Harper) is created of these witty flashes, almost indecently revealing the banalities, the pretensions, the straitened boundaries of the familiar American small town, and of Clifford, sad little Methodist faun, with the desires and capacities for suffering (but not the capabilities) of an artist. . . . Miss Parrish has not her roots in deep enough soil for this to be the ultimate revelation of the American small town, or of the pathos of its Cliffords. . . . But she is supremely readable and witty, and she will always remind you more engagingly than anyone else that soul-outpourings are subservient to mosquito-bites.

Woodblock by Pierre Pinsard for Cendrars' *Little Black Stories for Little White Children*

VALENTINE KATAEV'S *The Embezzlers* (Dial) is a slap-stick account of the maudlin adventures of an absconding middle-aged accountant and a young cashier. . . . It is a noisy, good-humoured book, written by a lusty and intelligent young man, and it is more than that—it is the first novel to have come out of Russia since the Revolution. . . . Partly because of its uproarious vitality, partly because it marks a significant development in Russian literature, it has been selected by both the Book Society of England and the Book-of-the-Month Club in America. . . . It is ribald human comedy and sociological history. . . . Philip Stephanovitch and Ivan stand for an apparently large class of casual embezzlers in Russia. Their pathetic attempts to amuse themselves in Leningrad are vivid with pictures of its streets, restaurants, hotels, and clubs. . . . When the two return penniless from their long spree, they are almost glad to face the peacefulness of a five-year jail sentence, and the reader closes the book with a little bit of the same feeling. . . .

Drawing by Covarrubias for *Born to Be*

SWINNERTON IS AN ADEPT at all those things we hold dear in a novel for a fireside evening at home, or, better, for reading in bed. . . . At his best, as in *Nocturne* and *The Elder Sister,* he is unmatchable; at his worst, he is pleasant diversion. . . . *Sketch of a Sinner* (Doubleday, Doran) is upper middle: that is, we expect some change back from the usual superlatives we hand Mr. Swinnerton. . . . There is less dramatic unity to this story of a charming, simple woman torn between two-and-a-half loves than Mr. Swinnerton at his best can achieve. . . . We fail to care very much what does happen to Lydia, to her gently ineffectual husband, to the faun-like Ambrose, to Gerard the sinister. . . . Perhaps if Mr. Swinnerton had not raised our depraved hopes by his title, we would have been better satisfied, for of sin in the book there is little going on nothing. . . . One real grievance we have against it. The four characters keep meeting by accident in the London streets with the regularity of policemen on neighbouring beats. . . .

A HISTORICAL ROMANCE always warms some hearts, particularly when it is as gorgeous as Virginia Hersch's *Bird of God* (Harper). . . . This won honourable

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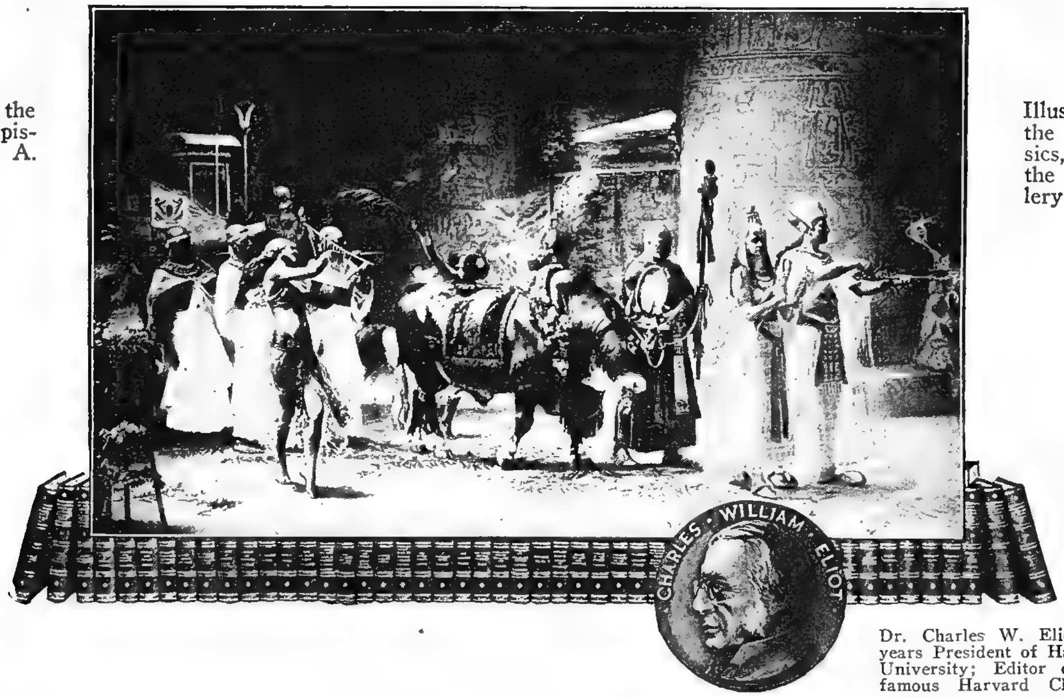

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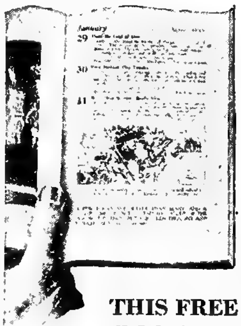

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mention in the Harper Prize Novel Contest, and well it might. . . . It is the story of Domenico Theotocopulo of Crete, known to the world as El Greco. Not enough about his life has been known to justify a real biography of this famous sixteenth century artist, but by studying every possible source, the world he lived in, the pictures which breathe the man, Miss Hersch has evolved a probable story and a superbly drawn character. . . . First Renaissance Italy in the days of an aged Titian and Tintoretto; then Spain and the beautiful Toledo, a Spain torn by Inquisition and taxation—fantastic, corruptly beautiful. Finally El Greco the artist was shaped into the mystic giant whose art is blood-relation to that of such moderns as Cezanne and Picasso. . . . The love stories in the book are partly fact, partly fiction, but handled with a fine artistic passion. . . . And then there are nine beautiful reproductions of paintings, with El Greco's self-portrait as frontispiece. . . .

Topsy, by James Daugherty, from a new edition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

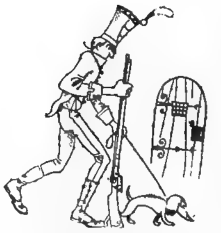
A MAN WHO CALCULATINGLY set out to seem always chivalrous, generous, charming, is the hero of W. B. Maxwell's latest excellent story, *The Man Who Pretended* (Doubleday, Doran). . . . Oswald despises himself for his hypocrisy, for the love of adulation, and for the ambition which are his spurs. . . . But the reader catches on pretty soon that Oswald is fast turning into an ideal, and that the conquest of his normal fears and meannesses is more touching because these faults seem to Oswald so abnormally great. . . . It is far from a preachy tale, however. . . . Not a great book, but a human, interesting, and admirably written one. . . . Almost any not-too-serious-minded person would relish it. . . .

LAUGHING BOY (Houghton Mifflin) is a tale of the Navajos of Arizona in which you will find yourself thousands of miles from choked city streets, wandering "on the trail of beauty" through canyon and desert, listening to the throbbing chant of the Indian ceremonial dance. . . . Laughing Boy, the hero, is "all Navajo even to his faults . . . a warrior under his gaiety, and by songs and his silver, an artist." . . . His love for a partially Americanized Navajo girl who hopes to win her way back to her people through him, is made into a dramatic story; the atmosphere is unescapable; the manner of the telling is prose poetry. . . . Oliver La Farge, the author, has lived much among these Indians, and this is an unusually fine first novel. . . .

A STURDY BOOK, and just the sort of one for a present, with its scent of pipe-tobacco and cold out-of-doors, is J. B. Priestley's *The Good Companions* (Harper). It is the Odyssey, happy, sound, and sure, of a Yorkshire labourer, a maiden lady of thirty-seven, a Cambridge tutor, and a troupe of traveling players; a hundred well-sketched minor characters and the English countryside are the background. . . . The book made us feel good just to have read it, so that we are loath to admit we were a little bored. . . . Six hundred and forty pages of smallish type proved an almost overpowering amount of even the best English roast beef and spiced apple tart. . . .

A YOUNG MAN WHO not long ago was barrel-organing his way through England to satisfy his wanderlust, is now being hailed as the literary find of the year. . . . This is Graham Greene, twenty-three-year-old author of *The Man Within* (Doubleday, Doran), and we are inclined to agree with his admirers. . . . Mr. Greene has written a superb novel, both dignified and exciting, simple and subtle . . . a study of the war of two personalities, the one fine, the other cowardly, but regenerated by the fineness, both meeting disaster. . . . There is plenty of action (it's all about Sussex smugglers), but the author makes us care more about the conflict in the souls of Andrews and Elizabeth. . . . For somebody who likes to "discover" his authors and books. . . .

Windlestraws, by Phyllis Bottome (Houghton Mifflin), would, before we read it, have been one of our best Christmas bets. . . . But it is an unreal book, although somewhat fascinating: the complicated, bizarre relationship between the incredible Beatrice, her husband, her lover, and Jean the outsider had us eager for its solution. . . . Miss Bottome fools us there too. . . . The novel closes triumphantly on page 317, with happiness for all and a baby on the way, all very neat but unconvincing. . . . Miss Bottome's writing is as excellent as ever. . . .



Drawing by Frank Dobias, from *Kasperle's Adventures*

TWO FULL-BLOODED American novels about the War have split a $25,000 prize offered by Houghton Mifflin and the *American Legion Monthly*. . . . Strictly speaking, neither of them is a novel; both are panoramas in prose—the one a brief searchlight-sweep across the fighting fronts; the other a gigantic canvas of the scenes behind the front, made of a thousand small details. . . . The first is *God Have Mercy On Us!* by William T. Scanlon, a pugnacious marine turned author who enjoyed the part of the war that was honest conflict, and makes it seem exciting and brave and awful. . . . His book is less

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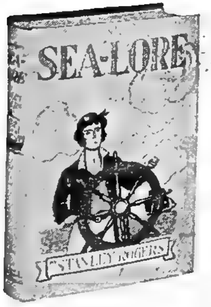

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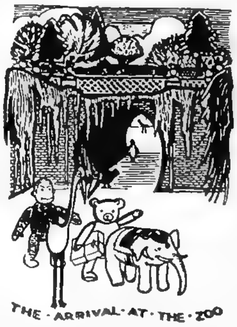
big however, than Mary Lee's, the first important war novel by a woman. Miss Lee was behind the lines all during the American participation, and she saw, felt, and thought deeply. . . . Her book is made up of a thousand brief pictures, done in staccato prose . . . a kaleidoscopic presentation of the war from behind the scenes. It is not a book to read through at a sitting; it would probably be a better book if it were not so long. . . . But it is honest, vivid, worth reading. . . .

"BROTHERS'N and Sistern, what-all is thisyer 'tarnal meestery of the moon-ball? How become hit to be, that she keeps a-burnin' thar in the heavens, waxin' and a-wanin' up thar in her ficklesome glory of beauty?" . . . Or perhaps it is the legend of the red-bird who oncet-ter-was-a-high-born'd British lady, tooken with terriblest love for the Waggoner's Boy . . . or one of a dozen others. . . . We could not possibly pick for you our favourite among the dozens of folk-tales retold and created by Percy MacKaye in *Weathergoose-Woo!* (Longmans). . . . Here is the real imaginative creation, the folk-tale flavour, the "dad-charmin' " vocabulary, the simple sophistication of the mountain-whites. . . . Mr. MacKaye has never done a better job. . . .

SILLY AND PLEASANT is Thorne Smith's *Stray Lamb* (Cosmopolitan). . . . Mr. Lamb, supposedly just another commuter, has no self-control at all. . . . He can't help changing into animals now and then. . . . It is nonsense done matter-of-factly; *Babbitt* written by the author of *Jack and the Beanstalk*. . . . It is a young book, gay, irrepressible, as sweet and at times as nerve-wracking as a puppy. . . .

NUMEROUS other creations, which might well be just the thing you were looking for, include Michael Arlen's *Babes in the Wood*, on the usual polished pattern; Gertrude Atherton's story of *Dido, Queen of Hearts*, also of Carthage; *Kept Woman*, by Viña Delmar, realism without any particular point; *Chariot Wheels*, by Sylvia Thompson, author of *The Hounds of Spring; Dawn*, by S. Fowler Wright, a disappointing but actionful sequel to *Deluge;* A. S. M. Hutchinson's *The Uncertain Trumpet* (Little, Brown), which should do much to win back those waverers in his audience who were sadly bored by the two novels following *If Winter Comes;* Percival Christopher Wren's *Soldiers of Misfortune* (Stokes), pure entertainment in the best Major Wren manner; John Erskine's *Sincerity* (Bobbs-Merrill), his famous wit against a modern setting; James Branch Cabell's "Way of Ecben" (McBride), with an epilogue in which he reviews his career. . . .


THE · ARRIVAL · AT · THE · ZOO

From *The Toys' Adventures at the Zoo*, by Gwen White

DETECTIVE STORIES: *Poison in a Garden Suburb*, by G. D. H. and M. Cole (Payson and Clarke); *Dr. Krasinski's Secret*, by M. P. Shiel (Vanguard), a mystery-extravaganza gorgeously mad; *The Secret of 37 Hardy Street*, by Robert J. Casey, of the Chicago *News* (Bobbs-Merrill); *Dartmouth Murders*, by Clifford Orr (Farrar & Rinehart). . . .

ALEXANDRE DUMAS wrote an incredible number of books, and now, years after his death, one more has been discovered—hundreds of big, blue pages closely covered with his flowing hand, recounting his ridiculous, charming, even dull experiences as owner of a yacht. . . . *On Board the "Emma,"* translated by Richard Garnett and published by Appleton, is half a diary of years hitherto unexplained, half a humorous tale of his adventures with the beguiling and extravagant *Emma*. . . . It palls, for it is a very plump book, and the thread it hangs upon is thin, but it is yet of remarkable interest to Dumas lovers. . . . And the book being a sort of autobiography, it brings us, fortunately, to our next category, which we were beginning to think we would never reach. . . .

Biography

Rich man, poor man, beggar man, thief;
Doctor, lawyer, merchant, chief—

All of them have had their biographies written this year. . . . There are also a handful of presidents and kings; a dozen generals, poets, and prime ministers. . . . Almost any uncle would be gratified by the gift of *The Autobiography of Calvin Coolidge* (Cosmopolitan), or *Up to Now* (Viking), by Alfred E. Smith, depending on how he votes. . . . Another up-to-the-minute volume is *J. Ramsay MacDonald*, by H. H. Tiltman (Stokes). Those who fell under the spell of MacDonald's silver voice on his recent trip to this country will be interested in this adequate explanation of the man and the Labour Prime Minister. . . .

OF THE BIOGRAPHIES that we have read lately, we would recommend most eagerly Brand Whitlock's *La Fayette* (Appleton); Bernard Fäy's *Franklin* (Little, Brown); Loth's *Lorenzo the Magnificent* (Brentano); Romain Rolland's *Beethoven;* Anne Ellis's *Life of an Ordinary Woman* (Houghton Mifflin); and our old frivolous favourite, *The Incredible Marquis* (Farrar and Rinehart), Gorman's biography of Dumas; the delightful two volumes of letters from Disraeli to Lady Chesterfield and Lady Bradford (Appleton), edited by the Marquis of Zetland. . . .

A FEW SEPARATE words about Brand Whitlock's *La Fayette*, in two handsome

These books can be purchased at your bookstore. See "Where to Buy Books," pages 35 and 36.

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A few short months ago, the musical performance of this history-making instrument was news that thrilled the country. Today, this performance is accepted as the standard by which other instruments are judged . . . and of which they must inevitably fall short. For no other radio is micro-synchronous; no other radio is backed by acoustical experience comparable with Victor's; and no other radio bears the name "Victor" and the famous Victor trademark.

When you go to your Victor Dealer's to hear the three models of Victor-Radio, you will find them beautiful, compact and soundly built, as becomes Victor instruments. You will discover that they are as delightful to see as to hear. You will recognize them as the gift that keeps on giving . . . a royal gift . . . *at a very low price!* Victor Talking Machine Division, Radio-Victor Corporation of America, Camden, N. J., U. S. A.

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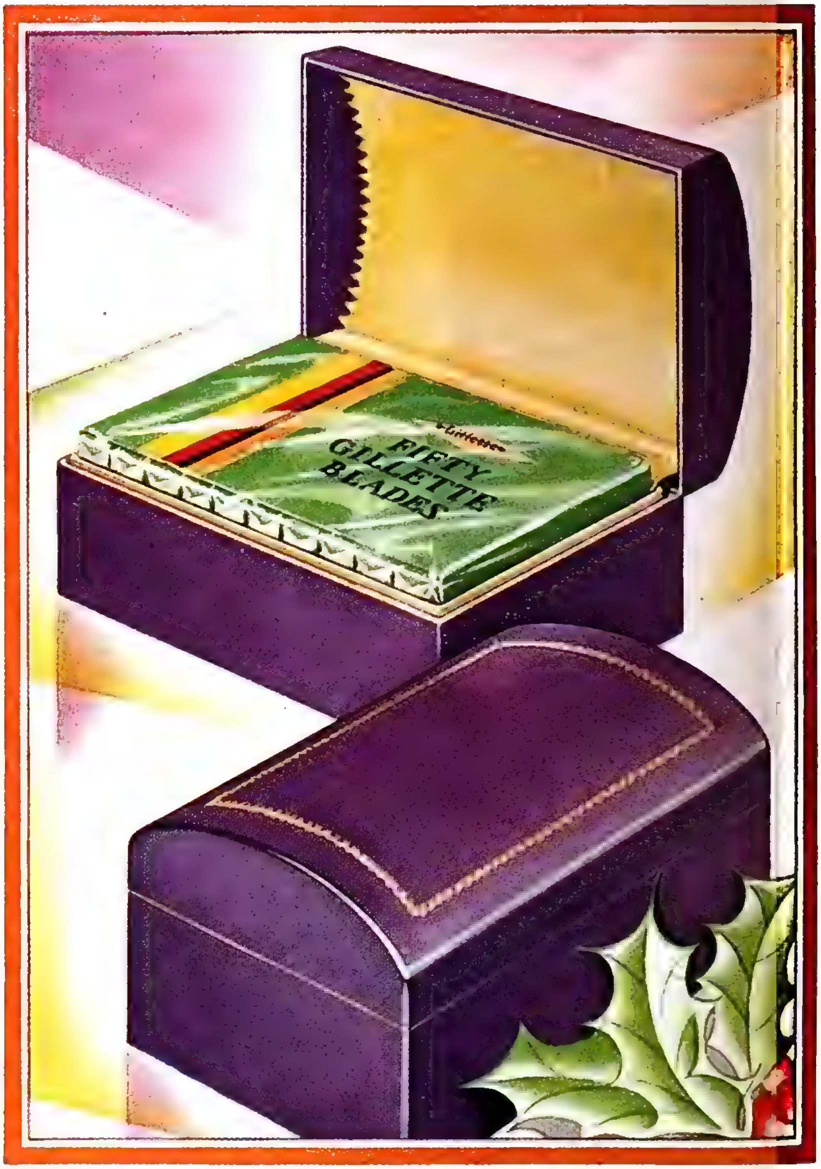

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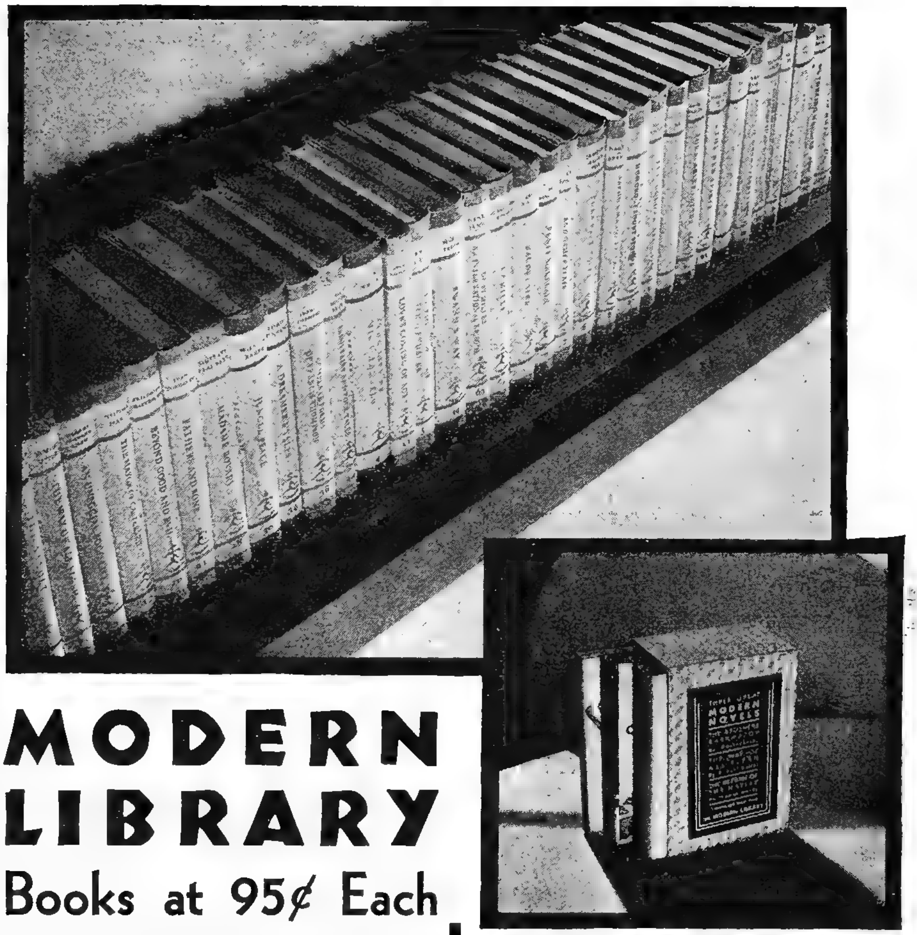
Beethoven the Creator (Harper) is no mere biography. . . . Beethoven becomes a very god in Romain Rolland's picture of him, a powerful superman, whose human frailties and weaknesses only throw into greater relief his great mind and genius. . . . The book is an exploration of the realm of genius. Not only Beethoven, but Shakespeare, Goethe, Napoleon, and all great minds are a little more real after reading this book. . . . Beethoven is in his thirtieth year at the opening of this book; he is only thirty-six at the close. But in those six years he had given the world some of its greatest music. . . . Rolland translates the passion and beauty of these musical masterpieces into word symphonies. We can almost hear the "fiery arpeggios that surge up from the depths to the heights" and the "exhausted murmur welling up from an abyss of sorrow." . . . The translation by Ernest Newman is perfect. . . .

TAYLOR GORDON'S *Born to Be,* the autobiography of the famous negro singer of spirituals, is a naïvely confiding volume, very entertaining for the first half. . . . Matter-of-factly, but with natural irony, Gordon tells about his childhood in Montana, days as a page at Big Maudie's "on the line," as pin boy in a bowling alley, as pullman porter, as Ringling Brothers' henchman . . . days of simple love affairs, racy parties, poverty and sweetness. . . . Then suddenly at thirty-six he is singing before kings, patronized by "high society," and patronizing them and us. The last half of the book is, at any rate, far too elegant for us. . . . Carl Van Vechten writes for the book an inordinately glowing foreword, Muriel Draper an unqualified introduction. . . . For the marvelous cartoon drawings of Covarrubias, embalming both Montana sporting houses and New York drawing rooms, we have nothing but superlatives ourselves.

WE HAVE NEVER been a member of the League for the Adoration of the Prince of Wales, and we approach most stories about him with a slightly skeptical air. . . . But we went down unconditionally before W. and L. Townsends' *Biography of H. R. H. The Prince of Wales* (Macmillan), which is a dignified yet amusing presentation of the heir to the British throne. . . . The Townsends' book traces the career of Edward Albert from his infancy up to the time of last December's dramatic dash from the African jungle to the bedside of his father. . . . Its progress is steady and even, and it is replete with anecdotes which depict the Prince as the very human person the world knows him



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to be. . . . In the chapter headed, " 'When I was a Kid. . . .' " we learn that the royal eye was once blacked. Another anecdote, delightfully notorious, concerns the skylarking of the Prince's brothers when they, with Edward Albert and Princess Mary, were en route to King George's coronation in 1911. Three and a half years later we meet the Prince, just out of his 'teens, in the trenches, and follow him from front to front, where, because of his own cheerful disregard, he is ever a source of anxiety to the officers charged with his safety. . . . The tours which the Prince took after the War—to Canada and America, and to India, Australia, South Africa, and South America —are still fresh in the minds of the millions who saw him then; but, reading in entertaining detail of the weight of formal ceremony under which he lived during those strenuous months, we are surer than ever that we would not like to change jobs with him. . . .

Drawing by Helen Sewell for Miriam Potter's *Sally Gabble and the Fairies*

THERE ARE ALL sorts of important Americans getting themselves talked about; the most important perhaps is Bernard Fäy's *Benjamin Franklin* (Little, Brown). There is an inexhaustible fund of absorbing material about this amusing gentleman, and Mr. Fäy has chosen, gathered, and interpreted and presented it well. . . . Next on our list comes *Daniel Webster* (Cosmopolitan, $5), studied with a new thoroughness by Allan L. Benson. . . . *Andrew Jackson: The Fighting President,* by Helen Nicolay, is a small and spirited volume issued by Century ($2), *Jefferson Davis,* by Allen Tate (Minton Balch), *The Raven,* by Marquis James, a life of Sam Houston, *John Brown,* by Robert Penn Warren (Payson and Clarke), are a few others that shall not be nameless. . . .

WE HEAR THAT THE following are excellent, but as yet have not had time to read them: Katherine Anthony's *Queen Elizabeth* (Knopf); Lebvre's *Martin Luther* (Dutton); Lewinsohn's *Mystery Man of Europe* (Lippincott), the story of Sir Basil Zaharoff, the richest man on the continent; *The Peerless Leader,* by the late Paxton Hibben, a biography of Bryan about which more next month. . . .

THIS BRINGS US to Claude G. Bowers' *Tragic Era* (Houghton Mifflin), which is, in fact, a biography of a period. . . . We have been uncommon slow in reviewing it, but we would probably mention it again this month, anyway, as the ideal present for men and women who like to get their teeth into things when they read. . . . Inquire carefully first to find out if they have it already. . . . Claude Bowers, author of *Jefferson and Hamilton,* has chosen to present the unhappy years of turmoil and corruption that followed the death of Lincoln. . . . Mr. Bowers is a brilliant scholar with a pithy way of putting things, and this is a fascinating book. . . .

Travel

IF YOU REALLY want to know what we want for Christmas, it's travel books. . . . There has never been a more fascinating collection, and they make the ideal present. . . . Roy Chapman Andrews's *Ends of the Earth* (Putnam) is first choice. . . . Mr. Andrews is a charming personality, possessor of a feeling for drama and a natural prose style—and then, all the things that have happened to the man! *Ends of the Earth* traces his career from boyhood days spent cataloguing the birds and animals around Beloit, Wisconsin, to his first job in the American History Museum, scrubbing floors and then building the great papier-mâché whale model which all New York children are brought up on; to Alaska studying the home life of the whale; to the Chinese coast after more whale knowledge; to Borneo jungles; on sealing expeditions; to Mongolia. . . . It takes you nearly up to the days of his famous expeditions to Central Asia, the discovery of dinosaur eggs and of other souvenirs of the past, which are recounted in *On the Trail of Ancient Man,* his last year's book. . . .

YOU CAN'T exactly call Sir James Jeans' *Universe Around Us* (Macmillan) a travel book, and yet it has all the adventure of one. . . . We are far from scientific-minded, but we know of no book we would rather receive as a present this Christmas. . . . "Each time the child throws its toy out of its baby carriage, it disturbs the motion of every star in the universe," Sir James declares, and we are off. . . . This author has the ability to bring the knowledge of astronomers to the level of the layman—even when he is discussing Einstein's theory. . . . Here are a few chapter headings: Exploring the Sky, Exploring the Atom, Exploring in Time, Carving Out the Universe, Stars, Beginnings and Endings. . . . This is solid meat, and bears much studying; it is also charming. . . . It has clarity without sacrifice of truth. . . .

NEXT in our admiration comes Caroline Singer's and C. LeRoy Baldridge's *White Africans and Black* (W. W. Norton). . . . This is an amazingly beautiful book, as what book illustrated by Mr. Baldridge is not? . . . And the supporting cast—Caroline Singer (Mrs. Baldridge) as text-writer, Melvin Loos as format designer, William Edwin Rudge as printer—have done an ample share. . . . Sierra Leone, The Gold Coast, Nigeria, are alive before our eyes. . . . Caroline Singer has collected

Good books can be sold at 1/6 present prices

By GERALD CARSON

The development of the art of printing has made possible the production of beautiful books in great quantities at low cost. Free public education has given the average citizen an appreciation of good books. More fine literature is being read today than ever before.

In other fields the benefits of modern processes and methods have been passed on to the consumer, but in the field of books prices have steadily risen. The average novel is now sold at from two dollars ($2) to three dollars ($3) and non-fiction at from three to five dollars ($3—$5).

Considering this situation, the originator of *Paper Books,* himself a publisher, began to study the reason for the high cost of good books. The author's earnings, it was noted, did not affect the price of books. A far more important factor in publishing is the uncertainty of the sale of a book, and the costs of its exploitation.

From this followed the question: Can new books of distinguished literary quality be produced at a cost so low that they would be within the reach of every reader? Paper-makers, printers, writers, booklovers and critics were consulted. Finally the project of *Paper Books* took form.

The project rests upon the faith:

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Give more for the money and there will be more buyers.

Second: That the buyers can be secured in advance.

This is the principle of all book clubs.

By enrolling memberships in a book club the organizer is freed from treating each book he publishes as a speculation.

He is freed from certain expenses of exploitation and marketing. His market is a cash market, paid up in advance. He is thus enabled to reduce costs without cutting profits.

The subscription to *Paper Books* is Five Dollars a year.

It brings the lover of good literature and beautiful printing twelve new books for less than the price of two.

On the 25th of each month, for twelve months, a new book comes to the subscriber.

The books are selected by a distinguished Board of Editors: Lincoln Colcord, eminent author and critic, Louis Untermyer, famous editor and poet, Everett Dean Martin, one of America's foremost educators and author of "The Meaning of a Liberal Education," Padraic Colum, author of many books, Horace M. Kallen, lecturer at the New School of Social Research.

The Art Editors are Rockwell Kent and Elmer Adler. This artist and this master printer guarantee the decoration and typography of *Paper Books.*

Writing of the first Paper Book selection, "The Golden Wind" by Takashi Ohta and Margaret Sperry, a fascinating novel, the New York *Times* says: "Not only is it remarkable for a most unusual and successful blending of East and West in romantic narrative, but its selection marks it as a portent in American publication. With cover and end-papers designed by Rockwell Kent, in typography and form it is a distinguished piece of work, compounded of good paper, ample margins, fine clear type and well bound."

The latest selections, "Frederick the Great," a full-length biography by Margaret Goldsmith, and "Dewer Rides," by L. A. G. Strong, a widely discussed novel by a new English writer, have also received unusual critical praise and appreciation.

Paper Books makes no claim to assemble the best books of the month or the year or any other time. It claims only to select from among the manuscripts submitted those which meet the high standards of the Editorial Board for literary workmanship and intellectual integrity. Not only fiction, but books of biography, drama, poetry, philosophy, psychology and the sciences will be published. No field is excluded.

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a multitude of facts, observed a thousand interesting things, while her husband's drawings serve to interpret their significance. . . . The purpose of the book, as set forth in its preface, is "to convey the human beauty, the dignity and intelligence possessed by African peoples belonging to widely diversified areas and tribes, and to intimate the clash between white and black, bewildering to both." . . . It is an excellent purpose—and it is splendidly accomplished. . . .

The Book of Puka-Puka (Century) should effectively awaken the urge in nearly anybody to go vagabonding out to the South Seas. . . . In it Robert Dean Frisbie tells about his nine years as the only white man on an atoll of the Cook Islands, his only contact with the outside world the half-yearly visit of the schooner *Tiaré*. . . . It is a half-humorous, slightly sardonic picture of a white man "gone native" among a simple, kindly, and primitive race. . . . He has married a lovely little heathen, Little Sea—and, alas, subsequently philandered with her delectable cousin, Desire. . . . Has lived and roamed by night, and slept by day, in the manner of Puka-Pukans. . . . Has yarned nights through with old men who tell strange folk tales . . . assisted at births, and watched at deaths. . . . He has captured in words the charm and laziness of the coral isles, but we would have enjoyed his story more if he had suffered from an occasional mosquito, a light fever, or at least boredom. It is charmingly illustrated by Mahlon Blaine. . . .

TWO MORE: *Trailing the Giant Panda*, by Theodore and Kermit Roosevelt (Scribner), a record of a ten-months' hunting trip in China, and *Windjamming to Fiji*, by Viola Irene Cooper (Henkle), an unimportant but pleasant account of a two-months' trip to Fiji from Vancouver in a sixty-year-old barque. . . .

Wanda Gag pictures the hero of her book, *The Funny Thing*

ART AND NOT travel, but with the same sort of fascination, is Anita Brenner's much talked-of *Idols BeBehind Altars* (Payson and Clarke), a study of the traditions and people of Mexico. . . . In order to write this book Miss Brenner attended the National University of Mexico, worked with foremost anthropologists and archeologists, took up witchcraft in Indian villages, lived in Mexico's Greenwich Village, on *guerilla* ranches, at Maya ruins, and headed an investigation of Mexican art commissioned by the Mexican University. . . . The result is a rich book, with illustrations as thick in it as plums in a pudding. . . . A story of tribal beginnings, early civilizations, the unsuccessful attempts of Spaniard and Church to impose their own traditions, of a machine age to change the Mexican's artist-soul. . . . The Aztec idol has always, according to Miss Brenner, been behind the altar of the imposed European civilization, and will always be so. . . . Because the Indian speaks Spanish or rides in a Ford is no sign of any inward change. . . . Miss Brenner writes with a lyrical enthusiasm which illuminates the massive structure of her knowledge. We feel that we understand Mexico a little better as the result of reading this book.

WHEN YOU HAVE once fallen under the spell of Virginia Woolf's pellucid, lithely-knit prose, with clear thoughts swooping through it like swallows, you willingly miss nothing that she writes . . . which is to say that there is much even for gentlemen in her books about women. . . . This recent book, *A Room of One's Own* (Harcourt, Brace), is a discussion of "Women and Fiction" intended originally as lectures. . . . Mrs. Woolf—as charmingly as is possible—declares that woman's greatness in writing depends upon money and a room of her own. . . . And we only hope that you think her statement ridiculous enough to make you want to read the book, and fall before her deductions historical, intellectual, and psychological. . . .

HERVEY ALLEN'S *New Legends* is one of the real poetry events of the fall. . . . It is Mr. Allen's first book of verse in five years, and marks a steadily growing power over thought and loveliness. . . . Such favourites as "Sarah Simon," only available before in limited editions, are here in the narrative group; the lyrics have a passionate delicacy and unusual poetic finish; the philosophical poems at the end are, oddly enough, among the best. . . . There is a de luxe, autographed edition at $7.50, as well as the regular $2 edition (Farrar and Rinehart). . . .

WHEN MR. SITWELL chose the subject for his new book, *The Gothick North*, he determined that his "history of the fair-haired races in art" should not concern itself with the well-known relics of the period, but with the beauties of the ages when barons lived in their drafty, sombre halls with no thought of the miserable lives of the peasantry around them, and no thought of the New Learning emanating from the south. . . . These men were contentedly happy in a life such as that seen in the tapestries hanging on the walls of those castles, and this book is a bringing to life of those tapestries—an interpretation of beautiful and the little known things which are dead today. . . . In further pursuit of his aim, Mr. Sitwell has part fictionalized his book; he has taken an English spinster, who is a teacher of drawing, and her brother, people who represent that huge herd of those who love art but are blind to it, and with Mr. Sitwell as their guide, they pass through a poetical, imaginative

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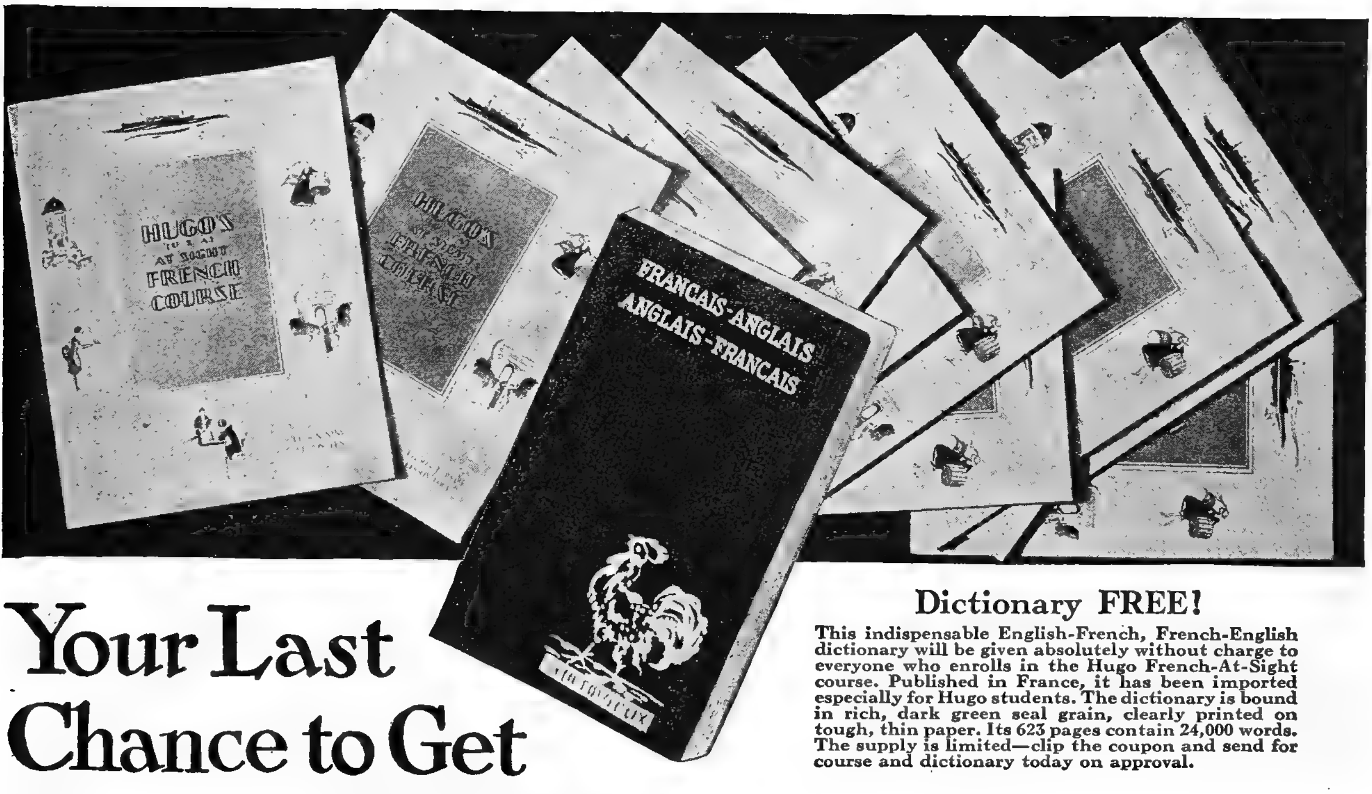

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parlez (speak)	par-lay
bouquet (a bunch of flowers)	boo-kay
beaucoup (much, many)	bow-koo
mais oui (but, yes)	may we

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>
> You have always wanted to see the Acropolis. At last you manage to get to Athens, but find that the hotel you have selected provides none of the comforts to which you are accustomed. It is impossible to get hot water, coffee, newspapers. Will you first hunt another hotel, or go to the Acropolis?
>
> You wake up tomorrow morning and find yourself in Bagdad. Will you be pleased, or dismayed?

THE WAY IN WHICH you answer these questions, and seventy-two others as fetching, in *You Can't Fail*, by Rutherford Platt (Putnam), instantly determines whether you should become an aerotherapist, blood-donor, calliope-player, caterer, coroner, pest-exterminator, President, or tea-taster. . . . It is an excellent way to spend an entertaining hour, and there seems less flub-dubbery about this volume than others of its ilk. . . . The general conclusions are surprisingly sound, although the deductions therefrom are a bit airy. . . .

BY WAY OF HUMOUR we suggest Will Cuppy's *How to Be a Hermit*, *Morrow's Almanack for 1930*, *The Gluyas Williams Book*, and *"The New Yorker" Album*. . . . There is much both instructive and touching in the simple confessions of the Little Brother of the Clams—as Mr. Cuppy, the original Greater North American sand, marsh, or beach hermit of Great South Bay, likes to call himself. . . . As for *Morrow's Almanack for 1930*, it is better than ever, amply fulfilling its purpose "To CHASTEN the Ribald & CORRUPT the Serious. To TOUGHEN the Tender-minded, and SOFTEN the Hard-boiled. To Satisfy EVERY need of EVERY PERSON." . . . Its contributors range from the best humourists to the best serious writers; poetry, witty discussion of books and events are sandwiched in between a hundred fooleries. . . . You get Burton Rascoe, Walter Winchell, Milt Gross, Sylvia Townsend Warner, John Macy, Richard Aldington, Don Marquis, Edward Hope, Anonymous, and the rest of them, all for $2.50. . . .

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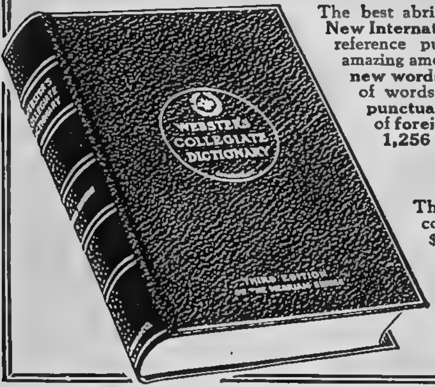

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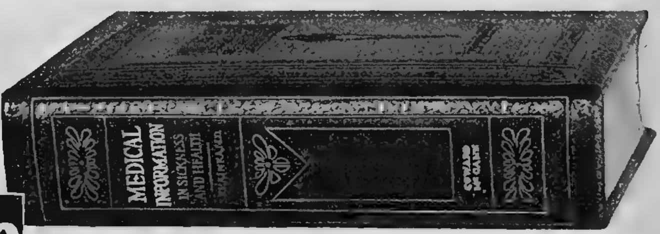
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OR TAKE MUKERJI'S latest book, *Chief of the Herd*, with Mahlon Blaine's illustrations breathing the feel of the jungle and catching the ponderousness of elephants as we have never seen it done before. . . . This is a Dutton book at $2.50, to satisfy the romance and nature-loving soul of any boy or girl from nine years on. . . .

WHICH REMINDS US that we had better divide our ravings into age groups if we are to be a real help to anybody. . . . First for the very young—from three or four to eight or nine. . . . Beatrix Potter, author of the famous *Peter Rabbit* books, *Jeremy Fisher* and *Mrs. Tiggywinkle*, has produced another nearly as good, called *The Fairy Caravan*. . . . We have read every word of it, with eager wonder at her consummate mastery of a sentence cadence that is unforgettable: "In the Land of Green Ginger there is a town called Marmalade, which is inhabited exclusively by guinea-pigs. They are of all colours, and of two sorts. The common, or garden, guinea-pigs are the most numerous. They have short hair, and they run errands and twitter. The guinea-pigs of the other variety are called Abyssinian Cavies. They have long hair and side whiskers, and they walk upon their toes." . . . David McKay publishes it. . . .

A LARGE FLAT VOLUME in a delirious riot of Czechoslovakian colours is one of Macmillan's several triumphs. . . . The story, all about mice, is by Josef Kozisek, the illustrations and designs by Rudolph Mates, a leading Czechoslovakian artist. . . . The book itself is printed in Czechoslovakia, and it seems to be quite the thing to have your printing done abroad. . . . From Great Britain's presses comes another Macmillan book—*The Toys' Adventures at the Zoo,* by Gwen White; we sympathized warmly with the desire of Georgina the Giraffe, Squeak the Penguin, Jumbo the Elephant, and the others to visit their long-lost relatives at the zoölogical gardens, and to carry them all presents. . . .

BEFORE WE desert animals for fairies, there is Kurt Wiese's (famous German wood-cut artist) story of his own kangaroo pet, with many delightful illustrations by him. . . . Coward-McCann publish it under the title *Karoo, the Kangaroo.* . . . They also publish Wanda Gág's utterly silly and nice *The Funny Thing.* . . . Figure out for yourself from the illustration on page 22 what sort of a beastie it is. . . . Anyway, it is very plaintive, and has lots of adventures. . . .

FIRST AMONG this year's fairy tale collections is one by Edmund Dulac, also illustrated by him, of old French stories. . . . *The Fairy Garland* is a handsome book published by Scribner, and costs four dollars, but it is probably the most beautiful children's book of the year. . . . Dorothy Coit's collection of old Persian tales retold for children, *The Ivory Throne of Persia,* is illustrated with vivid charm by children themselves. This is a Stokes book ($3). . . . Longmans, Green are reissuing Lang's Blue, Red, Green, and Yellow Fairy Books in a handsome new format. . . . *The Charm String* is another excellent collection of fairy tales, made by Albion Fellowes Bacon, sister of the author of the "Little Colonel" books, and published by L. C. Page and Company of Boston. . . . *Sally Gabble and the Fairies,* by Miriam Potter, illustrated by Helen Sewell, is one of the numerous books where the pictures are better than the text, but even the text is above the average. It's a $1 Macmillan book. . . . Artzybasheff has done the fantastic and lovely illustrations for *Three and the Moon* (Knopf, $3.50), a book of Brittany folk tales by Jacques Dorey. . . .

A Map of Children Everywhere is a grand idea. . . . Here is a pleasant big picture in clear soft blues and greens and yellows and reds, to hang on the nursery

Scribner Books for Christmas Gifts

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A Farewell to Arms
by
Ernest Hemingway
author of "The Sun Also Rises," etc.

"This book is full of beauty and variety. . . . Whether the war scenes in Italy or the love scenes in Switzerland are the more remarkable, it is not easy to say."—OWEN WISTER, *author of "The Virginian," etc.*
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author of "Heaven Trees"
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by Edwin Frandin Dakin

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—*New York Evening Post.*
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author of "Chosen Poems," etc.

"An entertaining collection of essays, examples of the strong lure of pure, masterfully handled English and entertaining facts."—*Portland Express.*
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Smoky
by Will James
(Scribner $2.50 Illustrated Classics)

Numerous paintings by the author and many black-and-white drawings distinguish this superb new edition of a favorite story. $2.50

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See Where to Buy Books, Pages 35 and 36

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Study the advertisements carefully and you will be repaid. Take notice of them and you can cut your budget. That means money for a growing savings account, a trim new Parisian hat, or enough to repaint the kitchen. You will be surprised to find how that extra value in advertised products tucks away pennies in your purse. Advertisements are your guide to that increased value.

wall, which will also do much to inst the young shoots who kneel on their at night to study it all out. . . . In e part of the map there are childre characteristic costume and activities. This is a John Day brilliance, carried by Ruth Hambridge, and worth the $ . . . Along the same trend is V. M. yer's *Child's Geography of the W* (Century, $3.50), a chunky, profusel lustrated book by the headmaster school who knows how to make alluringly human. . . .

It is high time we gave a thought t older children. . . . *Marco Polo, Junior*, by Harry A. Franck (published by The Century Company for $2) is the sort of book there should be more of. . . . An experienced grown-ups' author with something of interest to tell to a wider audience, does so with zest and without condescension. . . . *The Book of Famous Horses* is for the younger of this older group, if you get what we mean. . . . It is a Houghton Mifflin ($2.50) book, well illustrated, telling the stories of such famous horses as Alexander the Great's, Napoleon's, Washington's, Grant's, Sheridan's, Custer's, and others. Much history can be painlessly absorbed through these stories. . . .

Amundsen, by Bellamy Partridge (Stokes, $2.50); *Bob Bartlett, Master Mariner*, by Fitzhugh Green (Putnam, $1.75); *Kit Carson*, by Flora Seymour (Century, $2); *Pioneer Heroes*, by J. Walker McSpadden (Crowell, $2) all seem unusually good adventure books. We have not read them through, but we would like to. . . . Then there are *The Boy Scouts' Yearbook* (Appleton) and Joseph Leeming's *Things Any Boy Can Make* (Century), both full of sensible and tempting pastime suggestions. . . . Harold T. Wilkins' *Hunting Hidden Treasure* will warm the heart of any adventurous boy. . . .

For older girls there are an excellent homesteading story, *The Jumping-Off Place*, by Marian Hurd McNeely (Longmans, $2); Elsie Singmaster's *You Make Your Own Luck*, a really well-written story (also Longmans); Helen Ferris's *This Happened to Me*, a serious discussion of such problems as the desire for popularity, self-consciousness, maladjustment at home, super-sensitiveness, by one admirably suited to her task seems unusually worthwhile. . . .

Two books that deserve a paragraph to themselves are Acland Harper's *Forgotten Gods*, a story of archeological adventure in the Yucatan (Doubleday, Doran), and *When Mammoths Roamed the Frozen Earth*, by Heinrich Schutz, as good for grown-ups as for older children (Cape and Smith). . . .

A new edition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, illustrated by James Daugherty, is also

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F. F.

Recommended Books

Fiction

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THE METHODIST FAUN, by Anne Parrish. Harper. $2.50. A diverting book about a nice American small-town boy who thinks he is an artist.

THE EMBEZZLERS, by Valentine Kataev. Lincoln MacVeagh (The Dial Press). $2.50. The protracted spree of two amateur embezzlers. An hilarious book that is the first novel to come out of Soviet Russia.

SKETCH OF A SINNER, by Frank Swinnerton. Doubleday, Doran. $2.50. A charming, somewhat slow story of a woman's struggles between the claims of three men.

THE MAN WHO PRETENDED, by W. B. Maxwell. Doubleday, Doran. $2.50. Oswald thinks himself a dreadful young man for pretending to be as nice as he really is.

LAUGHING BOY, by Oliver La Farge. Houghton Mifflin. $2.50. An excellent story of the Navajos.

THE GOOD COMPANIONS, by J. B. Priestly. Harper. $3. The leisurely adventures of a Yorkshire labourer, a spinster, a school teacher, and a group of traveling players, in a robust English novel.

THE MAN WITHIN, by Graham Greene. Doubleday, Doran. $2.50. A subtle and exciting love story of Sussex smugglers and a girl.

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BIRD OF GOD, by Virginia Hersch. Harper. $2.50. El Greco makes a fascinating hero for an unusually fine historical romance.

WEATHERGOOSE, WOO! by Percy McKaye. Longmans. $2.50. Imaginative, delicious folk tales of the North Carolina mountains.

THE STRAY LAMB, by Thorne Smith. Cosmopolitan. $2. Absurd gamboling of a commuter. Delightful fooling.

IT'S A GREAT WAR, by Mary Lee. Houghton Mifflin. $3.

GOD HAVE MERCY ON US! by William T. Scanlon. $2.50. Houghton Mifflin. The story of the war from behind the front, as seen by a woman; and the story of a marine in battle. These two books divided between them the $25,000 Houghton Mifflin-*American Legion Monthly* War Novel Contest Prize.

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Of the Golden Book Magazine, published monthly at New York, N. Y., for October 1, 1929.

State of NEW YORK }
County of New York } ss.

Before me, a notary public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Albert Shaw, Jr., who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of the Golden Book Magazine, and the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 443, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit: 1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business manager are: Publisher, The Review of Reviews Corporation, 55 Fifth Ave., New York, Editor, Edith O'Dell, 55 Fifth Ave., New York; Managing Editor, Edith O'Dell, 55 Fifth Ave., New York; Business Manager, Albert Shaw, Jr., 55 Fifth Ave., New York. 2. That the owner is: The Review of Reviews Corporation, 55 Fifth Ave., New York; Albert Shaw, 55 Fifth Ave., New York. 3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent. or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages or other securities are: None. 4. That the two paragraphs next above giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also, that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest, direct or indirect, in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him. Signed Albert Shaw, Jr., Business Manager. Sworn to and subscribed before me this 30th day of March, 1929. Signed, Alvin E. Blomquist, Notary Public. (My commission expires March 30, 1931.)

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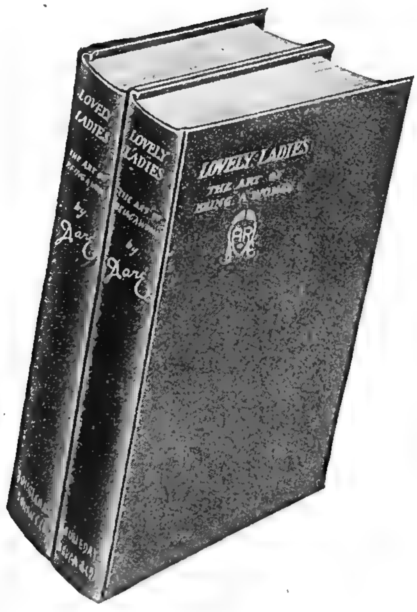

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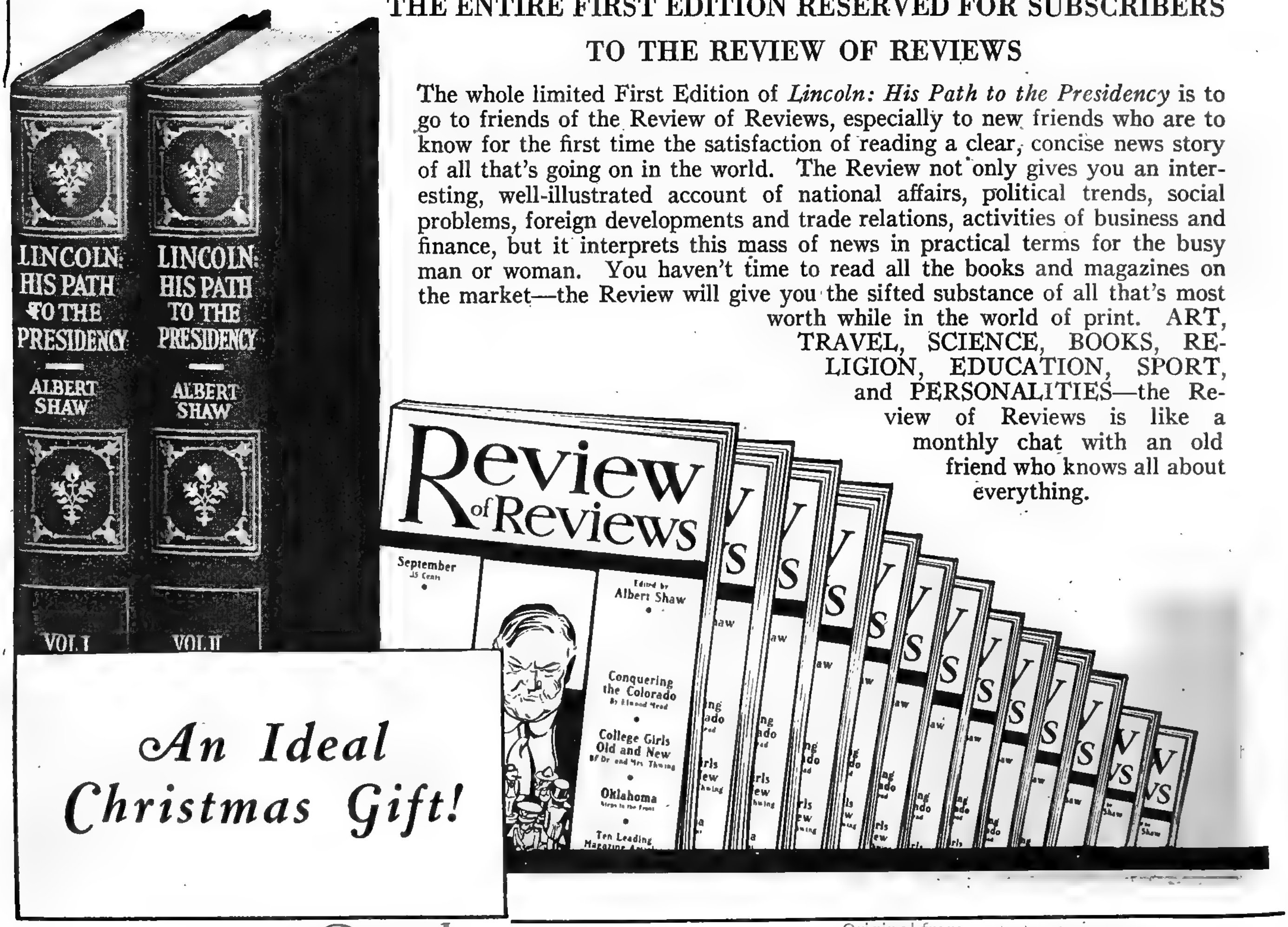

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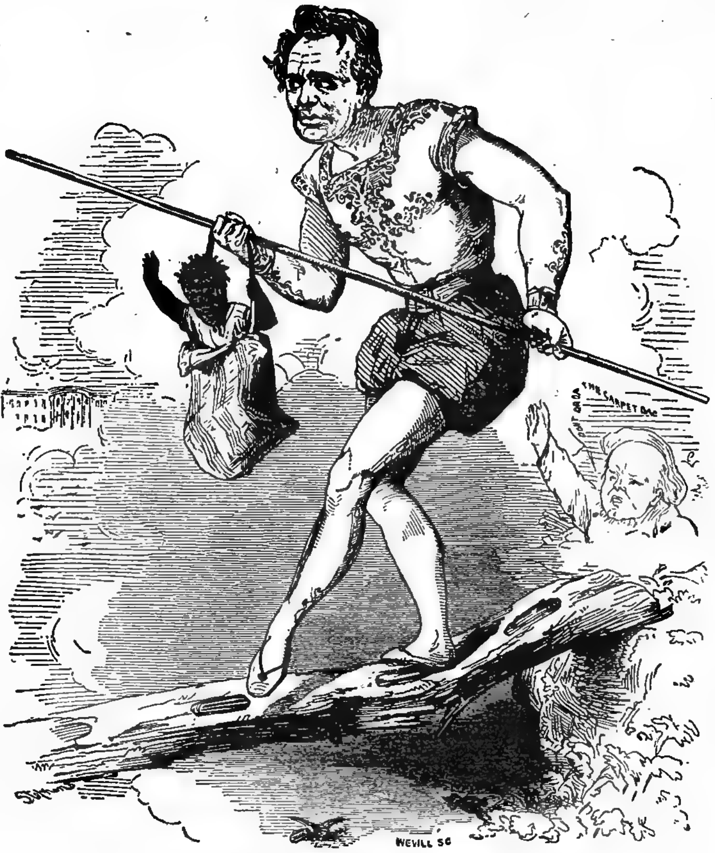

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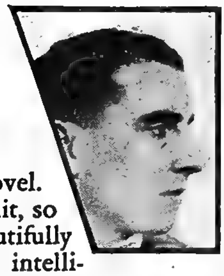

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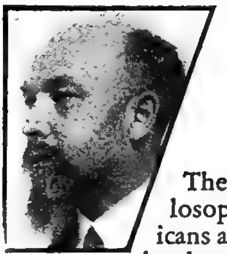

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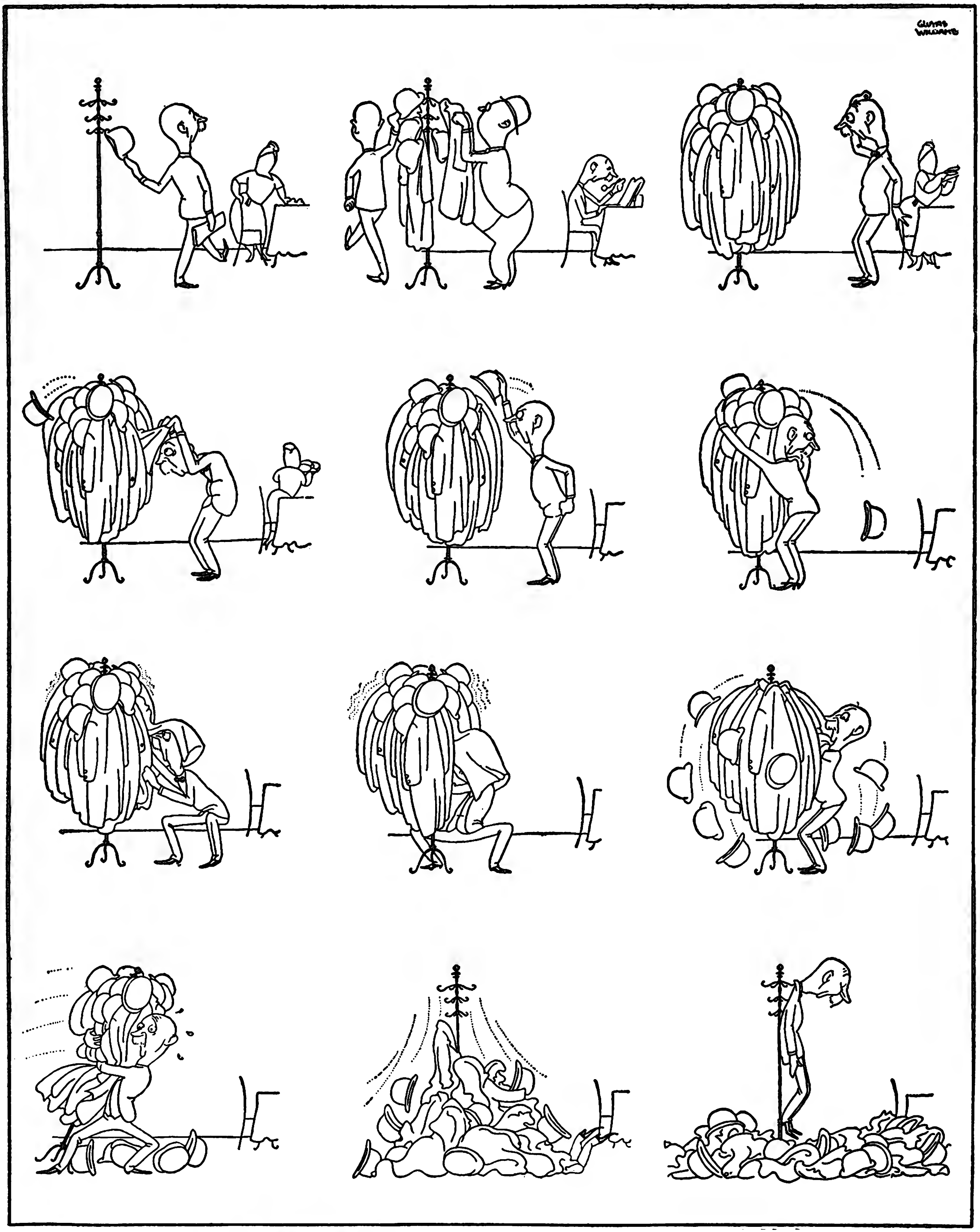
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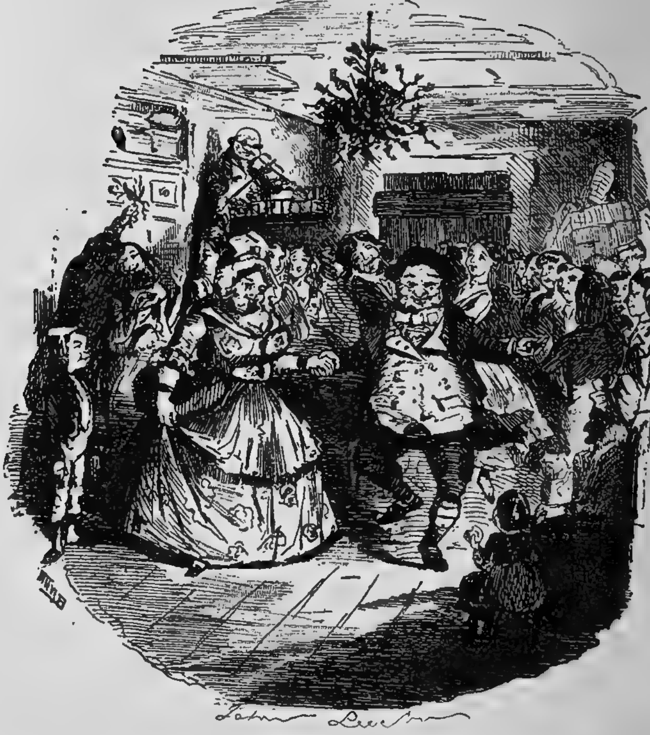

From a contemporary drawing by John Leech

YO HO, MY BOYS!" said Fezziwig. "No more work tonight. Christmas Eve, Dick. Christmas, Ebenezer! Let's have the shutters up," cried old Fezziwig, with a sharp clap of his hands, "before a man can say Jack Robinson!" . . .

It was done in a minute. Every movable thing was packed off, as if it were dismissed from public life for evermore; the floor was swept and watered, the lamps were trimmed, fuel was heaped upon the fire; and the warehouse was as snug, and warm, and dry, and bright a ballroom as you would desire to see upon a winter's night.

In came a fiddler with a music-book, and went up to the lofty desk, and made an orchestra of it, and tuned like fifty stomach-aches. In came Mrs. Fezziwig, one vast substantial smile. In came the three Miss Fezziwigs, beaming and lovable. In came the six young followers whose hearts they broke. In came all the young men and women employed in the business. In came the housemaid, with her cousin, the baker. In came the cook, with her brother's particular friend, the milkman. In came the boy from over the way, who was suspected of not having board enough from his master; trying to hide himself behind the girl from next door but one, who was proved to have had her ears pulled by her mistress. In they all came, one after another; some shyly, some boldly, some gracefully, some awkwardly, some pushing, some pulling; in they all came, anyhow and everyhow. Away they all went, twenty couple at once; hands half round and back again the other way; down the middle and up again; round and round in various stages of affectionate grouping; old top couple always turning up in the wrong place; new top couple starting off again, as soon as they got there; all top couples at last, and not a bottom one to help them! When this result was brought about, old Fezziwig, clapping his hands to stop the dance, cried out, "Well done!" and the fiddler plunged his hot face into a pot of porter, especially provided for that purpose. . . .

There were more dances, and there were forfeits, and more dances, and there was cake, and there was negus, and there was a great piece of Cold Roast, and there was a great piece of Cold Boiled, and there were mince-pies, and plenty of beer. But the great effect of the evening came after the Roast and Boiled, when the fiddler (an artful dog, mind! The sort of man who knew his business better than you or I could have told it him!) struck up "Sir Roger de Coverley." Then old Fezziwig stood out to dance with Mrs. Fezziwig. . . .

And when old Fezziwig and Mrs. Fezziwig had gone all through the dance; advance and retire, both hands to your partner, bow and curtsey, corkscrew, thread-the-needle, and back again to your place; Fezziwig "cut"—cut so deftly, that he appeared to wink with his legs, and came upon his feet again without a stagger.

When the clock struck eleven, this domestic ball broke up. Mr. and Mrs. Fezziwig took their stations, one on either side of the door, and shaking hands with every person individually as he or she went out, wished him or her a Merry Christmas.

A Christmas Carol.

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VOLUME X DECEMBER, 1929 NUMBER 60

By WILLIAM J. LOCKE

A Christmas Mystery

> "I cannot tell how the truth may be:
> I say the tale as 'twas said to me."

W J Locke

THREE MEN WHO HAD gained great fame and honour throughout the world met unexpectedly in front of the bookstall at Paddington Station. Like most of the great ones of the earth they were personally acquainted, and they exchanged surprised greetings.

Sir Angus McCurdie, the eminent physicist, scowled at the two others beneath his black eyebrows.

"I'm going to a God-forsaken place in Cornwall called Trehenna," said he.

"That's odd; so am I," croaked Professor Biggleswade. He was a little, untidy man with round spectacles, a fringe of grayish beard, and a weak, rasping voice, and he knew more of Assyriology than any man, living or dead. A flippant pupil once remarked that the Professor's face was furnished with a Babylonic cuneiform in lieu of features.

"People called Deverill, at Foullis Castle?" asked Sir Angus.

"Yes," replied Professor Biggleswade.

"How curious! I am going to the Deverills, too," said the third man.

This man was the Right Honourable Viscount Boyne, the renowned empire builder and administrator, around whose solitary and remote life popular imagination had woven many legends. He looked at the world through tired gray eyes, and the heavy drooping blond mustache seemed tired, too, and had dragged down the tired face into deep furrows. He was smoking a long black cigar.

"I suppose we may as well travel down together," said Sir Angus, not very cordially.

Lord Boyne said courteously: "I have a reserved carriage. The railway company is always good enough to place one at my disposal. It would give me great pleasure if you would share it."

The invitation was accepted, and the three men crossed the busy, crowded platform to take their seats in the great express train. A porter laden with an incredible load of paraphernalia, trying to make his way through the press, happened to jostle Sir Angus McCurdie. He rubbed his shoulder fretfully.

"Why the whole land should be turned into a bear garden on account of this exploded superstition of Christmas is one of the anomalies of modern civilization. Look at this insensate welter of fools traveling in wild herds to disgusting places merely because it's Christmas!"

"You seem to be traveling yourself, McCurdie," said Lord Boyne.

"Yes—and why the devil I'm doing it, I've not the faintest notion," replied Sir Angus.

"It's going to be a beast of a journey," he remarked some moments later, as the train carried them slowly out of the station. "The whole country is under snow—and as far as I can understand we have to change twice and wind up with a twenty-mile motor drive."

He was an iron-faced, beetle-browed, stern man, and this morning he did not seem to be in the best of tempers. Finding his companions inclined to be sympathetic, he continued his lamentation.

"And merely because it's Christmas I've had to shut up my laboratory and give my young fools a holiday—just when I was in the midst of a most important series of experiments."

Professor Biggleswade, who had heard vaguely of and rather looked down upon such new-fangled toys as radium and thorium and helium and argon—for the latest astonishing developments in the theory of radio-activity had brought Sir Angus McCurdie world-wide fame—said, somewhat ironically:

"If the experiments were so important, why didn't you lock yourself up and finish them alone?"

"Man!" said McCurdie, bending across the carriage, and speaking with a curious intensity of voice, "d'ye know, I'd give a hundred pounds to be able to answer that question?"

"What do you mean?" asked the Professor, startled.

"I should like to know why I'm sitting in this damned train and going to visit a couple of addle-headed society people whom I'm scarcely acquainted with, when I might be at home in my own good company furthering the progress of science."

"I myself," said the Professor, "am not acquainted with them at all."

It was Sir Angus McCurdie's turn to look surprised.

"Then why are you spending Christmas with them?"

"I reviewed a ridiculous blank-verse tragedy written by Deverill on the Death of Sennacherib. Historically it was puerile. I said so in no measured terms. He wrote a letter claiming to be a poet and not an archæologist. I replied that the day had passed when poets could with impunity commit the abominable crime of distorting history. He retorted with some futile argument, and we went on exchanging letters, until his invitation and my acceptance concluded the correspondence."

McCurdie, still bending his black brows on him, asked him why he had not declined. The Professor screwed up his face till it looked more like a cuneiform than ever. He, too, found the question difficult to answer; but he showed a bold front.

"I felt it my duty," said he, "to teach that preposterous ignoramus something worth knowing about Sennacherib. Besides, I am a bachelor, and would sooner spend Christmas (as to whose irritating and meaningless annoyance I cordially agree with you) among strangers than among my married sisters' numerous and nerve-racking families."

Sir Angus McCurdie, the hard, metallic apostle of radio-activity, glanced for a moment out of the window at the gray, frost-bitten fields. Then he said:

"I'm a widower. My wife died many years ago and, thank God, we had no children. I generally spend Christmas alone."

He looked out of the window again. Professor Biggleswade suddenly remembered the popular story of the great scientist's antecedents, and reflected that as McCurdie had once run, a barefoot urchin, through the Glasgow mud, he was likely to have little kith or kin. He himself envied McCurdie. He was always praying to be delivered from his sisters and nephews and nieces, whose embarrassing demands no calculated coldness could repress.

"Children are the root of all evil," said he. "Happy the man who has his quiver empty."

Sir Angus McCurdie did not reply at once; when he spoke again it was with reference to their prospective host.

"I met Deverill," said he, "at the Royal Society's *soirée* this year. One of my assistants was demonstrating a peculiar property of thorium, and Deverill seemed interested. I asked him to come to my laboratory the next day, and found he didn't know a damned thing about anything. That's all the acquaintance I have with him."

Lord Boyne, the great administrator, who had been wearily turning over the pages of an illustrated weekly chiefly filled with flamboyant photographs of obscure actresses, took his gold glasses from his nose and the black cigar from his lips, and addressed his companions.

"I've been considerably interested in your conversation," said he, "and as you've been frank, I'll be frank too. I knew Mrs. Deverill's mother, Lady Carstairs, very well years ago, and of course Mrs. Deverill when she was a child. Deverill I came across once in Egypt—he had been sent on a diplomatic mission to Teheran. As for our being invited on such slight acquaintance, little Mrs. Deverill has the reputation of being the only really successful celebrity hunter in England. She inherited the faculty from her mother, who entertained the whole world. We're sure to find archbishops, and eminent actors, and illustrious divorcées asked to meet us. That's one thing. But why I, who loathe country house parties and children and Christmas as much as Biggleswade, am going down there today, I can no more explain than you can. It's a devilish odd coincidence."

The three men looked at one another. Suddenly McCurdie shivered and drew his fur coat around him.

"I'll thank you," said he, "to shut that window."

"It's shut," said Boyne.

"It's just uncanny," said McCurdie, looking from one to the other.

"What?" asked Boyne.

"Nothing, if you didn't feel it."

"There did seem to be a sudden draught," said Professor Biggleswade. "But as both window and door are shut, it could only be imaginary."

"It wasn't imaginary," muttered McCurdie.

Then he laughed harshly. "My father and mother came from Cromarty," he said with apparent irrelevance.

"That's the Highlands," said the Professor.

"Ay," said McCurdie.

Lord Boyne said nothing, but tugged at his mustache and looked out of the window as the frozen meadows and bits of river and willows raced past. A dead silence fell on them. McCurdie broke it with another laugh and took a whisky flask from his hand-bag.

"Have a nip?"

"Thanks, no," said the Professor. "I have to keep to a strict dietary, and I drink only hot milk and water—and of that sparingly. I have some in a thermos bottle."

Lord Boyne also declining the whisky, McCurdie swallowed a dram and declared himself to be better. The Professor took from his bag a foreign review in which a German sciolist had dared to question his interpretation of a Hittite inscription. Over the man's ineptitude he fell asleep and snored loudly.

To escape from his immediate neighbourhood McCurdie went to the other end of the seat and faced Lord Boyne, who had resumed his gold glasses and his listless contemplation of obscure actresses. McCurdie lit a pipe, Boyne another black cigar. The train thundered on.

Presently they all lunched together in the restaurant car. The windows steamed, but here and there through a wiped patch of pane a white world was revealed. The snow was falling. As they passed through Westbury, McCurdie looked mechanically for the famous white horse carved into the chalk of the down; but it was not visible beneath the thick covering of snow.

"It'll be just like this all the way to Gehenna—Trehenna, I mean," said McCurdie.

Boyne nodded. He had done his life's work amid all extreme fierceness of heat and cold, in burning droughts, in simoons and in icy wildernesses, and a ray or two more of the pale sun or a flake or two more of the gentle snow of England mattered to him but little. But Biggleswade rubbed the pane with his napkin and gazed apprehensively at the prospect.

"If only this wretched train would stop," said he, "I would go back again."

And he thought how comfortable it would be to sneak home again to his books and thus elude not only the Deverills, but the Christmas jollities of his sisters' families, who would think him miles away. But the train was timed not to stop till Plymouth, two hundred and thirty-five miles from London, and thither was he being relentlessly carried. Then he quarreled with his food, which brought a certain consolation.

The train did stop, however, before Plymouth—indeed, before Exeter. An accident on the line had dislocated the traffic. The express was held up for an hour, and when it was permitted to proceed, instead of thundering on, it went cautiously, subject to continual stoppings. It arrived at Plymouth two hours late. The travelers learned that they had missed the connection on which they had counted and that they could not reach Trehenna till nearly ten o'clock. After weary waiting at Plymouth they took their seats in the little, cold local train that was to carry them another stage on their journey. Hot-water cans put in at Plymouth mitigated to some extent the iciness of the compartment. But that only lasted a comparatively short time, for soon they were set down at a desolate, shelterless wayside junction, dumped in the midst of a hilly snow-covered waste, where they went through another weary wait for another dismal local train that was to carry them to Trehenna. And in this train there were no hot-water cans, so that the compartment was as cold as death. McCurdie fretted and shook his fist in the direction of Trehenna.

"And when we get there we have still a twenty-mile motor drive to Foullis Castle. It's a fool name, and we're fools to be going there."

"I shall die of bronchitis," wailed Professor Biggleswade.

"A man dies when it is appointed for him to die," said Lord Boyne, in his tired way; and he went on smoking long black cigars.

"It's not the dying that worries me," said McCurdie. "That's a mere mechanical process which every organic being from a king to a cauliflower has to pass through. It's the being forced against my will and my reason to come on this accursed journey, which something tells me will become more and more accursed as we go on, that is driving me to distraction."

"What will be, will be," said Boyne.

"I can't see where the comfort of that reflection comes in," said Biggleswade.

"And yet you've traveled in the East," said Boyne. "I suppose you know the Valley of the Tigris as well as any man living."

"Yes," said the Professor. "I can say I dug my way from Tekrit to Bagdad and left not a stone unturned."

"Perhaps, after all," Boyne remarked, "that's not quite the way to know the East."

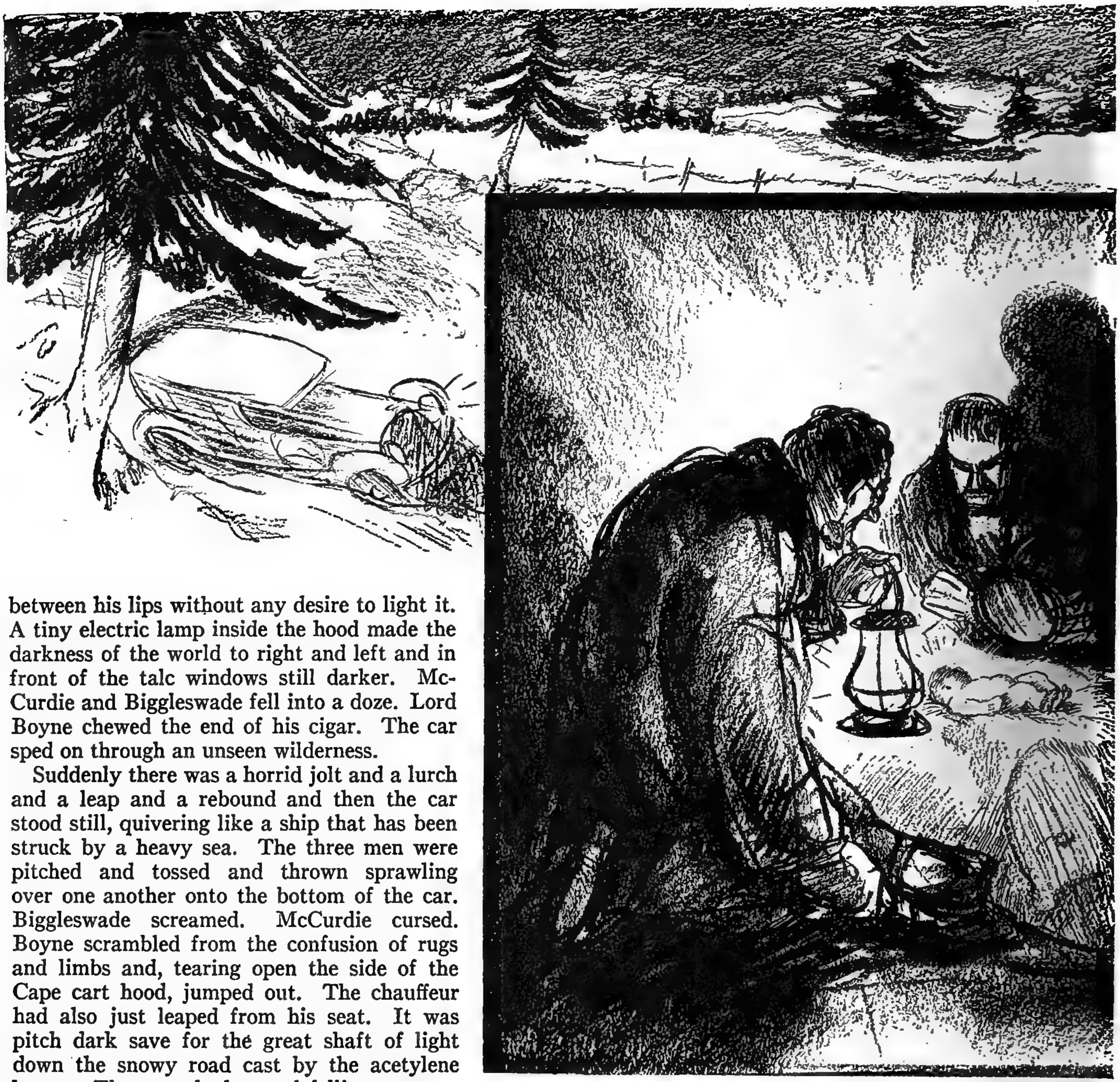
"I never wanted to know the modern East," returned the Professor. "What is there in it of interest compared with the mighty civilizations that have gone before?"

McCurdie took a pull from his flask.

"I'm glad I thought of having a refill at Plymouth," said he.

At last, after many stops at little lonely stations they arrived at Trehenna. The guard opened the door and they stepped out on to the snow-covered platform. An oil lamp hung from the tiny pent-house roof that, structurally, was Trehenna Station. They looked around at the silent gloom of white undulating moorland, and it seemed a place where no man lived and only ghosts could have a bleak and unsheltered being. A porter came up and helped the guard with the luggage. Then they realized that the station was built on a small embankment, for, looking over the railing, they saw below the two great lamps of a motor car. A fur-clad chauffeur met them at the bottom of the stairs. He clapped his hands together and informed them cheerily that he had been waiting for four hours. It was the bitterest winter in these parts within the memory of man, said he, and he himself had not seen snow there for five years. Then he settled the three travelers in the great roomy touring car covered with a Cape cart hood, wrapped them up in many rugs and started.

After a few moments, the huddling together of their bodies—for, the Professor being a spare man, there was room for them all on the back seat—the pile of rugs, the serviceable and all but air-tight hood, induced a pleasant warmth and a pleasant drowsiness. Where they were being driven they knew not. The perfectly upholstered seat eased their limbs, the easy swinging motion of the car soothed their spirits. They felt that already they had reached the luxuriously appointed home which, after all, they knew awaited them. McCurdie no longer railed, Professor Biggleswade forgot the dangers of bronchitis, and Lord Boyne twisted the stump of a black cigar



"It's true," he murmured. "Unto us a child is born,

between his lips without any desire to light it. A tiny electric lamp inside the hood made the darkness of the world to right and left and in front of the talc windows still darker. McCurdie and Biggleswade fell into a doze. Lord Boyne chewed the end of his cigar. The car sped on through an unseen wilderness.

Suddenly there was a horrid jolt and a lurch and a leap and a rebound and then the car stood still, quivering like a ship that has been struck by a heavy sea. The three men were pitched and tossed and thrown sprawling over one another onto the bottom of the car. Biggleswade screamed. McCurdie cursed. Boyne scrambled from the confusion of rugs and limbs and, tearing open the side of the Cape cart hood, jumped out. The chauffeur had also just leaped from his seat. It was pitch dark save for the great shaft of light down the snowy road cast by the acetylene lamps. The snow had ceased falling.

"What's gone wrong?"

"It sounds like the axle," said the chauffeur ruefully.

He unshipped a lamp and examined the car, which had wedged itself against a great drift of snow on the off side. Meanwhile McCurdie and Biggleswade had alighted.

"Yes, it's the axle," said the chauffeur.

"Then we're done," remarked Boyne.

"I'm afraid so, my lord."

"What's the matter? Can't we get on?" asked Biggleswade in his querulous voice.

McCurdie laughed. "How can we get on with a broken axle? The thing's as useless as a man with a broken back. Gad, I was right. I said it was going to be an infernal journey."

The little Professor wrung his hands. "But what's to be done?" he cried.

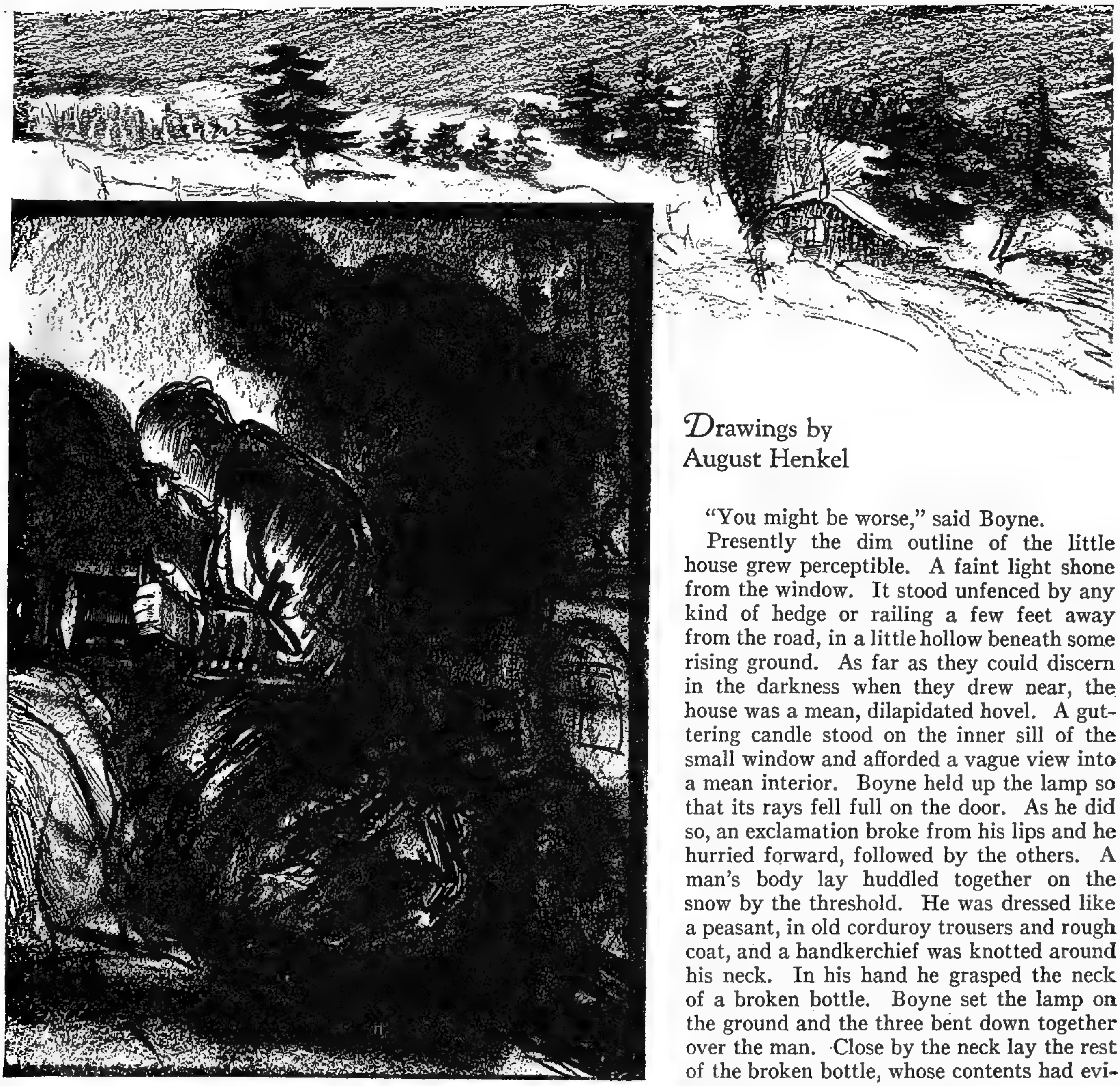
"Tramp it," said Lord Boyne, lighting a fresh cigar.

"It's ten miles," said the chauffeur.

"It would be the death of me," the Professor wailed.

"I utterly refuse to walk ten miles through a Polar waste with a gouty foot," McCurdie declared wrathfully.

The chauffeur offered a solution of the difficulty. He would set out alone for Foullis Castle—five miles further on was an inn where he could obtain a horse and trap—and would return for the three gentlemen with another car. In the meanwhile they could take shelter in a little house which they had just passed, some half mile up the road. This was agreed to. The chauffeur went on cheerily enough with a lamp, and the three travelers, with another lamp, started off in the opposite direction. As far as they could see they were in a long, desolate valley, a sort of No Man's Land, deathly silent. The eastern sky had cleared



unto us a son is given. Unto the three of us.”

Drawings by
August Henkel

somewhat, and they faced a loose rack through which one pale star was dimly visible.

“I'm a man of science,” said McCurdie as they trudged through the snow, “and I dismiss the supernatural as contrary to reason; but I have Highland blood in my veins that plays me exasperating tricks. My reason tells me that this place is only a commonplace moor, yet it seems like a Valley of Bones, haunted by malignant spirits who have lured us here to our destruction. There's something guiding us now. It's just uncanny.”

“Why on earth did we ever come?” croaked Biggleswade.

Lord Boyne answered: “The Koran says, ‘Nothing can befall us but what God hath destined for us.’ So why worry?”

“I'm not a Mohammedan,” retorted Biggleswade.

“You might be worse,” said Boyne.

Presently the dim outline of the little house grew perceptible. A faint light shone from the window. It stood unfenced by any kind of hedge or railing a few feet away from the road, in a little hollow beneath some rising ground. As far as they could discern in the darkness when they drew near, the house was a mean, dilapidated hovel. A guttering candle stood on the inner sill of the small window and afforded a vague view into a mean interior. Boyne held up the lamp so that its rays fell full on the door. As he did so, an exclamation broke from his lips and he hurried forward, followed by the others. A man's body lay huddled together on the snow by the threshold. He was dressed like a peasant, in old corduroy trousers and rough coat, and a handkerchief was knotted around his neck. In his hand he grasped the neck of a broken bottle. Boyne set the lamp on the ground and the three bent down together over the man. Close by the neck lay the rest of the broken bottle, whose contents had evidently run out into the snow.

“Drunk?” asked Biggleswade.

Boyne felt the man and laid his hand on his heart.

“No,” said he, “dead.”

McCurdie leaped to his full height. “I told you the place was uncanny!” he cried. “It's fey.” Then he hammered wildly at the door.

There was no response. He hammered again till it rattled. This time a faint, prolonged sound like the wailing of a strange sea-creature was heard from within the house. McCurdie turned round, his teeth chattering.

“Did ye hear that, Boyne?”

“Perhaps it's a dog,” said the Professor.

Lord Boyne, the man of action, pushed them aside and tried the door-handle. It yielded, the door stood open, and the gust of cold wind entering the house extinguished the candle within. They entered and found themselves in a miserable stone-paved kitchen, furnished with poverty-stricken meagerness—a wooden chair or two, a dirty table, some broken crockery, old cooking utensils, a fly-blown missionary society almanac, and a fireless grate. Boyne set the lamp on the table.

"We must bring him in," said he.

They returned to the threshold, and as they were bending over to grip the dead man the same sound filled the air, but this time louder, more intense, a cry of great agony. The sweat dripped from McCurdie's forehead. They lifted the dead man and brought him into the room, and after laying him on a dirty strip of carpet they did their best to straighten the stiff limbs. Biggleswade put on the table a bundle which he had picked up outside. It contained some poor provisions—a loaf, a piece of fat bacon, and a paper of tea. As far as they could guess (and, as they learned later, they guessed rightly) the man was the master of the house, who, coming home blind drunk from a distant inn, had fallen at his own threshold and been frozen to death. As they could not unclasp his fingers from the broken bottle neck they had to let him clutch it as a dead warrior clutches the hilt of his broken sword.

Then suddenly the whole place was rent with another and yet another long, soul-piercing moan of anguish.

"There's a second room," said Boyne, pointing to a door. "The sound comes from there."

He opened the door, peeped in, and then, returning for the lamp, disappeared, leaving McCurdie and Biggleswade in pitch darkness, with a dead man on the floor.

"For heaven's sake, give me a drop of whisky," said the Professor, "or I shall faint."

Presently the door opened and Lord Boyne appeared in the shaft of light. He beckoned to his companions.

"It is a woman in childbirth," he said in his even, tired voice. "We must aid her. She appears unconscious. Does either of you know anything about such things?"

They shook their heads, and the three looked at each other in dismay. Masters of knowledge that had won them world-wide fame and honour, they stood helpless, abashed before this, the commonest phenomenon of nature.

"My wife had no child," said McCurdie.

"I've avoided women all my life," said Biggleswade.

"And I've been too busy to think of them. God forgive me," said Boyne.

The history of the next two hours was one that none of the three men ever cared to touch upon. They did things blindly, instinctively, as men do when they come face to face with the elemental. A fire was made, they knew not how, water was drawn they knew not whence, and a kettle boiled. Boyne, accustomed to command, directed. The others obeyed. At his suggestion they hastened to the wreck of the car and came staggering back beneath rugs and traveling bags which could supply clean linen and needful things, for amid the poverty of the house they could find nothing fit for human touch or use. Early they saw that the woman's strength was failing, and that she could not live. And there, in that nameless hovel, with death on the hearthstone and death and life hovering over the pitiful bed, the three great men went through the pain and the horror and squalor of birth, and they knew that they had never yet stood before so great a mystery.

With the first wail of the newly-born infant a last convulsive shudder passed through the frame of the unconscious mother. Then three or four short gasps for breath, and the spirit had passed away. She was dead. Professor Biggleswade threw a corner of the sheet over her face, for he could not bear to see it.

They washed and dried the child as any crone of a midwife would have done, and dipped a small sponge which had always remained unused in a cut-glass bottle in Boyne's dressing-bag in the hot milk and water of Biggleswade's thermos bottle, and put it to his lips; and then they wrapped him up warm in some of their own woolen undergarments, and took him into the kitchen and placed him on a bed made of their fur coats in front of the fire. As the last piece of fuel was exhausted they took one of the wooden chairs and broke it up and cast it into the blaze. And then they raised the dead man from the strip of carpet and carried him into the bedroom and laid him reverently by the side of his dead wife, after which they left the dead in darkness and returned to the living. And the three grave men stood over the wisp of flesh that had been born a male into the world. Then, their task being accomplished, reaction came, and even Boyne, who had seen death in many lands, turned faint. But the others, losing control of their nerves, shook like men stricken with palsy.

Suddenly McCurdie cried in a high-pitched voice, "My God! Don't you feel it?" and clutched Boyne by the arm. An expression of terror came on his iron features. "There! It's here with us."

Little Professor Biggleswade sat on a corner of the table and wiped his forehead.

"I heard it. I felt it. It was like the beating of wings."

"It's the fourth time," said McCurdie. "The first time was just before I accepted the Deverills' invitation. The second in the railway carriage this afternoon. The third on the way here. This is the fourth."

Biggleswade plucked nervously at the fringe of whisker under his jaws and said faintly, "It's the fourth time up to now. I thought it was fancy."

"I have felt it, too," said Boyne. "It is the Angel of Death." And he pointed to the room where the dead man and woman lay.

"For God's sake, let us get away from this," cried Biggleswade.

"And leave the child to die, like the others?" said Boyne.

"We must see it through," said McCurdie.

A silence fell upon them as they sat round by the blaze with the new-born babe wrapped in its odd swaddling clothes asleep on the pile of fur coats, and it lasted until Sir Angus McCurdie looked at his watch.

"Good Lord," said he, "it's twelve o'clock."

"Christmas morning," said Biggleswade.

"A strange Christmas," mused Boyne.

McCurdie put up his hand. "There it is again! The beating of wings." And they listened like men spellbound. McCurdie kept his hand uplifted, and gazed over their heads at the wall, and his gaze was that of a man in a trance, and he spoke:

"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given——"

Boyne sprang from his chair, which fell behind him with a crash. "Man—what the devil are you saying?"

Then McCurdie rose and met Biggleswade's eyes staring at him through the great round spectacles, and Biggleswade turned and met the eyes of Boyne. A pulsation like the beating of wings stirred the air.

The three wise men shivered with a queer exaltation. Something strange, mystical, dynamic had happened. It was as if scales had fallen from their eyes. They stood together humbly, touching one another like children, as if seeking mutual protection, and they looked, with one accord, irresistibly compelled, at the child.

At last McCurdie unbent his black brows and said hoarsely:

"It was not the Angel of Death, Boyne, but another Messenger that drew us here."

The tiredness seemed to pass away from the great administrator's face, and he nodded his head with the calm of a man who has come to the quiet heart of a perplexing mystery.

"It's true," he murmured. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given. Unto the three of us."

Biggleswade took off his spectacles and wiped them.

"Gaspar, Melchior, Balthazar. But where are the gold, frankincense, and myrrh?"

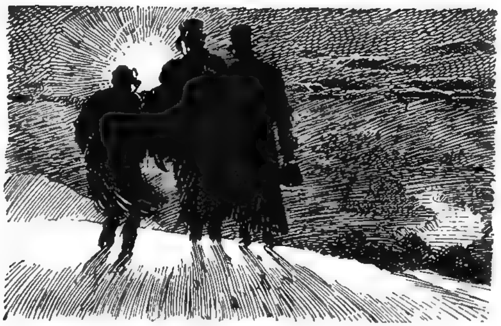
"In our hearts, man," said McCurdie.

The babe cried and stretched its tiny limbs.

Instinctively they all knelt down to discover its wants. The scene had the appearance of an adoration.

Then these three wise, lonely, childless men who, in furtherance of their own greatness, had cut themselves adrift from the ways of their brethren, and had grown old in unhappy and profitless wisdom, knew that an inscrutable Providence had led them, as it had led three Wise Men of old, to a nativity which should give them a new wisdom and a new spiritual outlook.

And when their watch was ended they wrapped up the babe with precious care, and carried him with them, into the great world.



Blendon Campbell

At the Crossroads

By RICHARD HOVEY

YOU TO THE LEFT and I to the right,
For the ways of men must sever—
And it well may be for a day and a night,
And it well may be forever.
But whether we meet or whether we part
(For our ways are past our knowing),
A pledge from the heart to its fellow heart
On the ways we all are going!
Here's luck!
For we know not where we are going.

Whether we win or whether we lose
With the hands that life is dealing,
It is not we nor the ways we choose
But the fall of the cards that's sealing.
There's a fate in love and a fate in fight,
And the best of us all go under—
And whether we're wrong or whether we're right,
We win, sometimes, to our wonder.
Here's luck!
That we may not yet go under!

With a steady swing and an open brow
We have tramped the ways together,
But we're clasping hands at the crossroads now
In the Fiend's own night for weather;
And whether we bleed or whether we smile
In the leagues that lie before us,
The ways of life are many a mile
And the dark of Fate is o'er us.
Here's luck!
And a cheer for the dark before us!

You to the left and I to the right,
For the ways of men must sever,
And it well may be for a day and a night,
And it well may be forever!
But whether we live or whether we die
(For the end is past our knowing),
Here's two frank hearts and the open sky,
Be a fair or an ill wind blowing!
Here's luck!
In the teeth of all winds blowing.

By STEPHEN FRENCH WHITMAN

The Woman

How the Story Came to be Written:

In 1913 I read in the *Literary Digest* that a scientist had drained monkeys of their blood, had then frozen them, and that presently, by thawing and blood-transfusion, he had given them a brief and rather inactive resumption of the processes of life. It occurred to me that the same might be done for human beings, and that frozen tissue might be expected to maintain indefinitely its condition at the moment of inanition. Such tissue, however, would have to be as completely as possible exsanguinated before freezing, as freezing would otherwise destroy the capillaries, and so forth, and make reanimation impracticable.

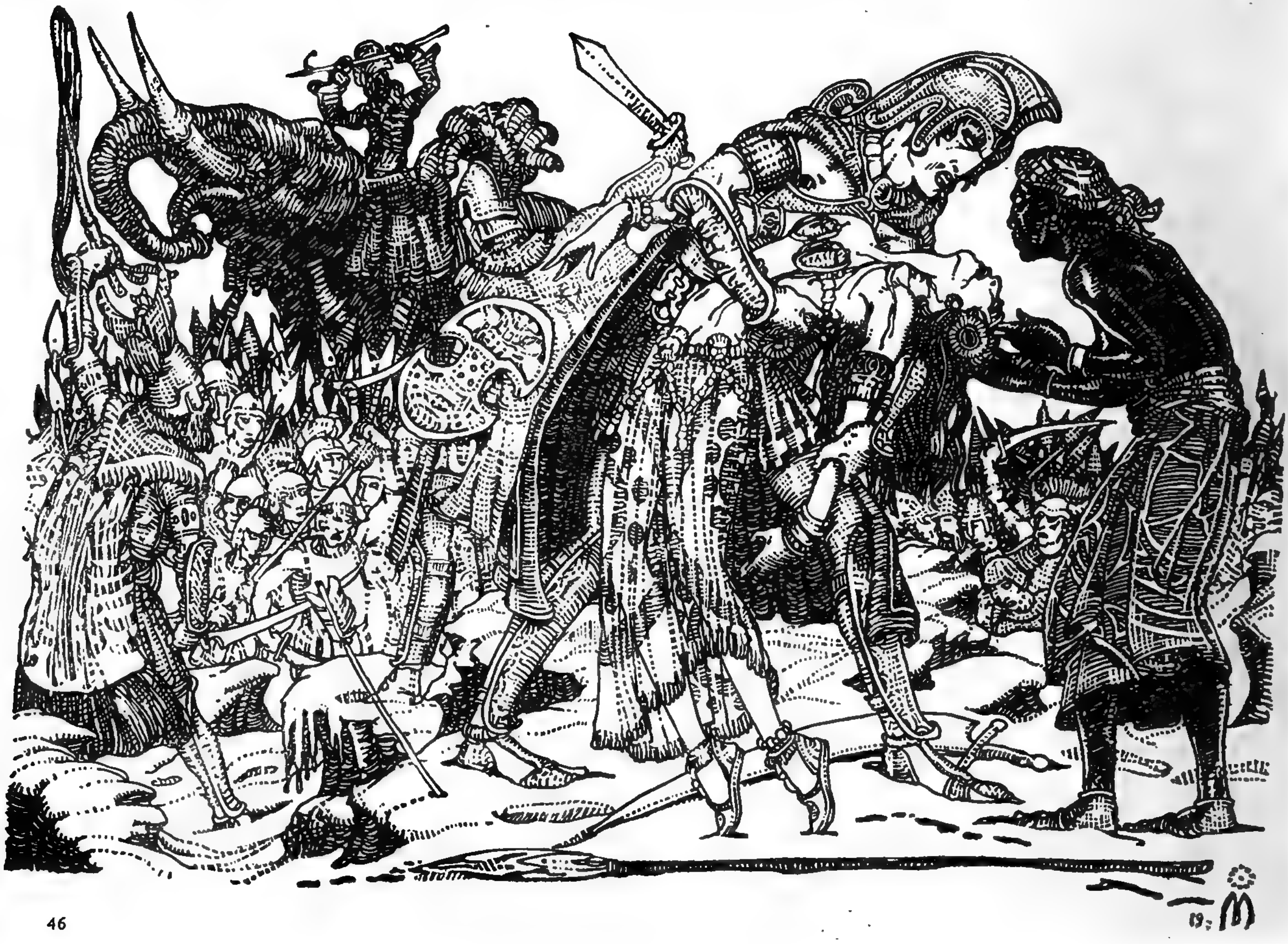
These thoughts were the basis for "The Woman from Yonder." As I wanted the duration of "death" to be as long as possible, and as I should personally like to meet one of the Athenian hetæræ, a conveniently imaginary glacier became my locale, and my chief character Nephele. I am aware that animal tissue needs more care in thawing than I have allowed it, and that Grimaux would have been prudent enough to supplement his own blood largely with isotonic saline; but in the story there was no chance for that. It is simply an imaginative tale for which the usual allowances must be made.

S. F. W.

For my part, I do not know what to think. I can only tell it as it happened.

My old friend, Alexandre Grimaux, invited me to visit him. It was a flattering proposal. Grimaux, besides being a famous, if somewhat spectacular, archæologist, is a notorious recluse. I doubt if he receives so intimately a friend a year, either in the house near Paris, which he occupies in winter, or in the charming nest on the hillside above Florence, where he was summering when I got his letter. His marvelous collection of antique objects, his books on dead arts and customs, his manuscripts and printers' proofs, form his whole interest. Or, rather, formerly did so. For lately Alexandre Grimaux had taken a wife.

This wife was a sort of mystery. No one seemed to know who she was or even what race had produced her. She was described as beautiful, silent, strange. She spoke her husband's language with difficulty, Italian with an extraordinary syntax of her own, English, German, and Russian not at all. She cared nothing for society. She gave the impression of a



Stephen French Whitman.

from Yonder

With an Introduction Written Especially for The Golden Book Magazine

stranger from afar, who in her new abode would always remain an alien. But everybody agreed that she seemed devoted to her husband.

I confess it was on account of her that I accepted Alexandre's invitation.

Cutting short an engrossing piece of work, I traveled a long way uncomfortably in order to throw myself on his hands before he had time to change his mind. For I had not known Alexandre Grimaux at school and in the university without discovering that he could be the master pattern for eccentrics.

Recently, in fact, it had been whispered about among those who came nearest to knowing him that his eccentricity was increasing in a way to cause uneasiness.

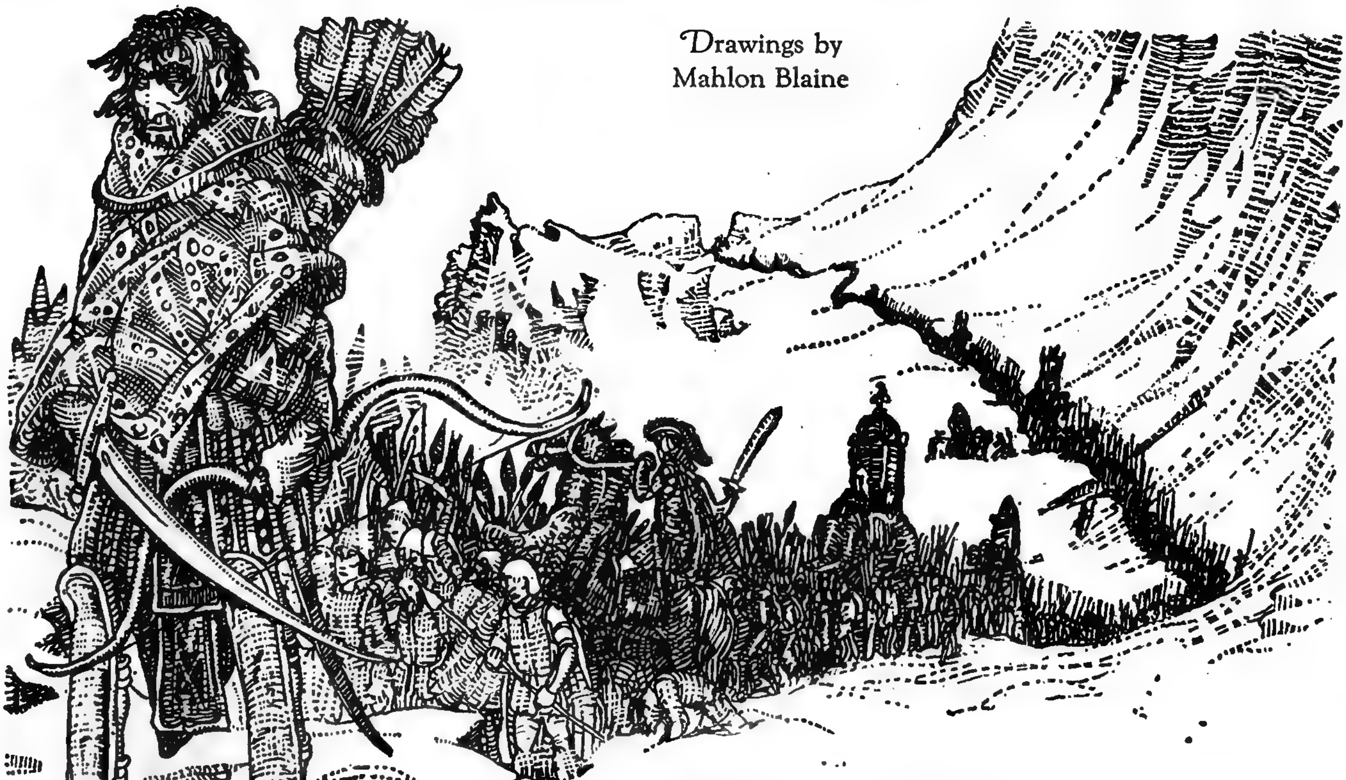
It was at about the time of his marriage that people began to mark this change in him.

I arrived at Florence toward evening, took carriage in the direction of Fiesole, and, just as the sun was setting, alighted, in a narrow road lined with cypresses, before his red-washed garden wall. No one had met me. The servant who opened the gate seemed surprised to see my luggage. I had difficulty in persuading him to disturb his master on my account. When finally Alexandre appeared, I knew he had forgotten all about inviting me. But at once he became cordial enough to dispel my misgivings.

"*Sapristi!* It is thou! How I am content!" He let his big hands fall on my arms in a hard grip.

Alexandre Grimaux was a tall, burly fellow whose taurine formidability reminded one of the images, bearded and covered with knotted muscles, on Assyrian palaces. He had a nose like a beak; his black eyes gleamed beneath bushy brows; his beard, inky and curly, rippled down over his waistcoat.

At first glance, he seemed to irradiate all his old strength and intellectual power, the splendid energy, combined with the vivid manner, of the peasant stock of southern France infected with genius. But almost immediately I perceived that something had happened to him. Whether from emotion or his labours, he was exhausted, nervously on edge, and much overwrought.



Drawings by Mahlon Blaine

"Quite well?" I asked.

"Never better," he retorted, as it seemed to me, defiantly. And he led the way through a hall of white stucco set with mutilated statues to his workroom.

"Tea, coffee, or something else? If you want a wash, the wash-room is there, rather untidy, I fear, from mummy-dust. Best to put some corrosive sublimate in the bowl. I have been dissecting the lady in the corner, a favourite of Ptolemy Soter, and as neat an example as I have ever seen of the Egyptian embalmer's subcutaneous padding. For half an hour after I unwrapped her she was the most shapely thing imaginable. Before she began to go, I got all my measurements, and took this cast of her head—a beauty, *hein?* But of course that sort of thing is merely recreation. You must see my work, my final classification of the pre-Hyksos pottery. And my new arrangement—the proper one this time—of the 'weak' and 'strong' Egyptian verbs. And a monograph on their pseudo-participle, which is *not* the perfect of the Semitic conjugation. Then there are some fragments—weapons and trinkets and so on—which I found in a very unlikely place. That reminds me. Madame is in her boudoir; she may join us and she may not. Meanwhile, repose."

He pushed me into a deep leather chair.

The immense desk before me was covered with folio-sheets and palimpsests, coins and chiseled gems, figurines and *ushebti* images from temples of Cnossus and Egyptian tombs, bottles of iridescent glass, Ægean masks, four-thousand-year-old toys of children, a bewildering litter of precious rubbish. In fact, the big room was a museum. Amphoræ, gladiators' helmets, torsos of marble and terra-cotta filled the corners. On the walls, between shelves crammed with books, or bristling with bronzes and Mycenæan faience, appeared plaster fragments, decorated with the dim mural painting of the Romans. Even the floors were littered, with heaps of personal ornaments, with baskets of broken shards, with tesseræ of porcelain mosaic from Crete, arranged on the rug like half-completed picture-puzzles. Over a chair hung lengths of mummy-linen, gummed and stained by spices, from the shriveled brown object, stiff and straight on the table by the windows, which once on a time had been the fair favourite of Ptolemy Soter.

IN THE MIDST of this disorder Alexandre Grimaux sat beaming at me, cigarette-smoke drifting through his inky, curly beard, in his hand a glass of brandy and soda, already nearly empty. For cognac, after working hours, was Alexandre's weakness—a weakness from which more than one professional rival had profited in the past, when garrulity had disclosed some secret work or new discovery.

"But how I am content," he repeated, "to have thee here! I have been lonely." He glanced sidewise at the door. "For a man friend, well understood; for one who knows me well, whom I can trust and talk to freely." He fell into a reverie. Presently he added: "For I *can* talk to you. To be sure, your ignorance of the ancient world is pitiable. Even Nero knew more of the Homeric Age than you know of so simple an epoch as his. But if you have no special erudition, at least you are sympathetic to me. You are a Sagittarius person, I an Aries. So——"

He regarded me sharply, then remarked with a sort of jovial ferocity:

"My wife, also, is a Sagittarius person, with Venus, Mercury, and the moon in the ascendant. Take care not to look at her too warmly, or I shall be apt to smash your head with this iron statuette of Aphrodite Mechanitis."

"Madame Grimaux is warned, I hope, that you've been so revolutionary as to invite me?"

"Why should I tell her that an American of the twentieth century is to be our guest? She is like me: except for each other, we live in the past."

"You ought to be very happy nowadays."

He looked away, as if secretly agitated.

"My friend, I have found a happiness so strange that I sometimes wonder whether I am not dreaming, or, perhaps——"

Abruptly he stood up, and offered to show me the garden. And the cause of these emotions did not appear till dinner was announced.

He awaited her in the pergola outside the dining-room. The heavens were full of mellow stars, the rose-garden below us was thick with purple shadows. Farther down the hillside, amid vague masses of foliage that blotted the distant sheen of Florence, nightingales were warbling. And the odour of innumerable flowers ascended to us with the concentrated sweetness that Italian nights bring forth.

"You are a sentimentalist, after all," I said; "for you never wander from this land for long."

"Less now than formerly," Alexandre replied, "because my wife prefers places that do not remind her too sharply of the past. That prevent her from suffering too much of a very curious home-sickness, the most curious sort, I believe, that mortal has ever known." He added, laying his hand on my shoulder: "I seem to be telling you things I never discussed before."

A suspicion began to invade me. I suggested:

"These slight fancies are amenable to the simplest treatment, to recreation out of doors, to taking the waters here and there, to certain kinds of literature—"

Alexandre laughed shortly.

"My wife is quite sane, my old one. She is merely the victim of peculiar circumstances that I am helping her to regard with resignation."

At this moment Mme. Grimaux appeared in the French window of the dining-room—against the light a tall silhouette of elegant contours, in a smoky-red gown of unusual, yet nobly simple, fashion. Her glinting hair, however, was intricately arranged in a coiffure such as I had never seen before. Advancing slowly into the pergola, she brought with her an indescribable atmosphere of mingled familiarity and strangeness. Something within me struggled, as it were, to remember.

"Mon amie," Alexandre was saying to her, "this is the one of my old companions whom I have not left behind."

She replied, somewhat haltingly, but in a voice like music:

"You are lucky enough to have saved one old companion."

In the yellow light that issued from the windows Alexandre's face displayed a flush.

"Ah, my dear!"

"It is nothing," she answered gently, and led the way to dinner.

At table, in the glow of the candles, her full beauty was revealed. I saw one of those amber-skinned blondes, with large brown irises and eyebrows darker than the tresses, who appear occasionally in Southern races. All her lovely features combined to give an effect intensely peculiar, exotic. Her forehead was low and broad; her eyes stood wide apart; her mouth, with its full lips, was of a perfect yet extraordinary contour. She looked warm-blooded, intense, capable both of deep thought and of quick wit; but all the while she seemed to be covering her qualities with a profound reserve. It was only when her gaze met Alexandre's that she at all revealed herself. Evidently she cared for her husband deeply. The impression came to me that he was the only person who might understand her, and whom she cared to understand.

There was much about her, all the same, from which, I felt, I ought to be able to divine her race, her proper environment, her social antecedents. She was vaguely suggestive of things which I had known, or known of. I thought that presently she would place herself for me involuntarily. But she did nothing of the sort.

Alexandre talked; she, for the most part, listened. She appeared neither shy nor bored. Once or twice she said enough to give the impression of amiable hospitality. No one could more clearly have shown herself, even in her gracious silences, a woman of the world. One saw, at least, that wherever she had come from, her previous surroundings had been rich and cultivated.

The dinner, as a dinner, was a success. Alexandre, for all his seclusion, and arduous excursions into desert places, remained a Frenchman of the South. His cook was an artist in the culinary *genre* of the Midi. We fed royally, perhaps a trifle too richly. And Alexandre, at least, drank champagne as the thirsty soil of those hills absorbs the autumn rains. Somehow I got the idea that he was planning to get tipsy in honour of my arrival.

With the fruit he became preposterous, frisky, brilliant, prodigal of his French intelligence and cynicism. His analogies were drawn from modern Europe and from ancient mythology. He displayed intimate acquaintance with the half-world of Paris and of pre-Christian Alexandria. A word about women's fashions, and he was off on a discussion of the hair-dressing just then affected by a *sociétaire* of the Comédie Française, as compared with the coiffures of the Greek hetæræ. He could not have been more in earnest if considering the most profound topic. The eternal Gaul was apparent, that inseparable mixture of philosopher and feminist found nowhere outside his land.

He had reached the point where one says what one would not have said, if customary inhibitions were not dissolved by alcohol; but so far his intoxication had not disturbed his wife. She accepted it not only as though she were accustomed to it in him, but also as if it was, where she came from, the natural accompaniment of a dinner.

Alexandre, mellowed and expansive, was proclaiming:

"It is the absolutely new in fashion that is alluring, or else the absolutely old, which seems new to our eyes. Madame Audran's latest coiffure renews her fascination. Just so, a woman of the present who dressed her hair in the Athenian triple row of curls, entwined with scarlet ribbons and powdered with gold-dust, might do nothing more ingenious to revive a dying interest in her sex—an interest abated, possibly, by an absorption in the very past from which she drew her style. Ah, the terrific fascination of the past, of certain epochs, to certain souls! To regain them otherwise than in imagination——"

With a glance at his wife he broke off quickly, turned to the man behind his chair, and commanded in a slightly thickened voice:

"Look on my desk for a bottle of milky glass, stoppered with wax."

And to me:

"My friend, to show that I am fonder of thee than of any other man, thou shalt have for a liqueur a thimbleful of Chios wine, as thick as honey, twenty-five hundred years old, dug up from a zone below the Cyd-Athenæum—from the Collytus."

Mme. Grimaux rose to her feet, slightly pale, but with a sweet smile of apology. She explained in her unready French:

"You have so much to talk of together that you will be quite happy alone."

I protested. Alexandre, too, remonstrated with a gush of words in an unfamiliar language. She answered him softly in the same tongue.

How I strove to analyze those sounds! They were no doubt the key to everything. Not Hebrew, or Arabic, or Berber, but indefinitely reminiscent of such inflections.

She gave me her hand, said good night, and drifted from the room. Despite the eccentric, flushed man who remained with me, the atmosphere seemed relieved at once of something unnatural.

Was it just then that it occurred to me that Mme. Grimaux's hair had been dressed in a triple row of curls, and entwined with smoky-red ribbons?

But Alexandre was saying, while nervously smoothing out his big black beard:

"Come into the study, then. We shall be more comfortable there. Auguste, bring that bottle back, and cigars and brandy—enough brandy for the evening."

We repaired to his workroom.

I gave him time for one more glass, then took the bull by the horns.

"Alexandre, in what language did you speak to Madame Grimaux just now?"

For a moment he looked at me doubtfully from under his heavy brows, pinched his beak-like nose, and fiddled with his watch-charm, an electrum coin of the Mermnads, stamped with the lion's head. At last he said with a grunt:

"*Eh, bien,* in Punic."

"Punic!"

He laughed derisively, though his fingers trembled as he lighted an immense cigar.

"Ha, you are surprised? You find it a trifle out of the way, *hein*, that one should speak fluently the language of the ancient Carthaginians? Why so? Because it is so little known in books? Ah, in books, to be sure! Books written by my erudite contemporaries, but only, mind you, of the inscriptions previous to 600 B.C. Ridiculous creatures, who work a year, from pompous, unidiomatic phrases carved in stone, and find another archaic dull vowel, and crown themselves as savants! Look you: I could sit down tonight at this desk and compose out of my head a manual for beginners, in Punic conversation, that would enable you after a few hours' study to talk intelligently, in the vernacular of the second century before Christ, with Hamilcar Barca. That is what I, Grimaux, know of Punic, and what those zanies who call themselves my contemporaries do not know."

"But it is marvelous! And Madame Grimaux also speaks it as well as that?"

"Bah! Madame speaks many languages."

"Not English, however, or German?"

"No, old numskull, not English, not German. Greek—the Greek of Corax, who wrote the *Art of Words*. Latin—the Latin of Cato! Egyptian—the Egyptian of the days of Ptolemy Philopator! Punic! But I have mentioned Punic? Lydian! Aha! That hits you? A lost language? Not at all. My wife speaks it; I speak it; we converse in it when the servants are about. I have made a Lydian grammar and a vocabulary, which I keep to myself, because otherwise my dear colleagues would call me an insane impostor. What good would it do them to know Lydian, anyway? Pearls before swine! For me, however, it is good—for sentimental occasions, for intimate *blague*. Its terms of endearment are exquisite, its slang is delicious. You Americans think you have a slang; but the slang of Crœsus' people, who, in effect, were the Yankees of that age, is of a pungency——"

He gulped down another liqueur-glass of cognac, and snorted scornfully:

"My wife is an intelligent woman. She comes of a very restricted class, the small feminine intellectual aristocracy of her race."

Surely the secret was about to be disclosed. With a little urging——

I suggested, in an offhand manner:

"You have not told me yet of the circumstances that produced all this felicity."

He lowered his eyelids, moved his feet uneasily, gazed askance into the corners, thick with shadows, and shining dimly with the treasures of long-vanished civilizations. His agitation was returning. My first impression—of a development in him of some distressing abnormality—recurred to me.

But confronted by the cue for full confession, he obviously recoiled. Yet I knew that sooner or later he would tell me everything; for I was the only human being, except his wife, sufficiently sympathetic to him, and in the end he, as a Frenchman, would have to say something to some one about his heart. Also, he was rapidly becoming drunk.

"Nevertheless," he ejaculated violently, "I ought to tell you nothing."

"Why, then, Alexandre, let us talk of other things."

He pulled hard at his cigar, made a movement toward his glass, withdrew his hand empty. He repeated in a voice that quivered:

"I ought to tell you nothing, nothing, nothing,"—he emptied his glass—"but I must. Name of God! And better you than another. You at least will not have me examined for my sanity." He leaned forward over the table till his black Assyrian beard brushed the heaps of glittering coins and gems. In an anxious tone, staring at me beseechingly, he asked, "Tell me truly, have I ever seemed to you at all unusual, eccentric?"

Without waiting for a reply, he sprang up, strode to a cabinet, returned with a handful of objects, which he laid on the desk before me. I stared at some flakes and crusts of rust, a few fragments of blackened silver, a scrap of fur-covered hide as hard as a board, and three small plates of gold riveted together. He looked sidewise toward the ceiling, with the air of a man whose conscience almost senses an external remonstrance; and I got the impression that Mme. Grimaux, doubtless in the room above, was somehow concerned even in the story of these objects. Then, lowering his voice, he said:

"Regard well these specimens, for they came at the beginning."

I gave it up.

"You see nothing significant?"

"I am not an archæologist, Alexandre."

He drank more brandy, sat down beside me, and put one large finger on the broadest mass of rust.

"This javelin-head is of a shape peculiar to the Lydian levies of the Carthaginian oligarchy."

He touched the riveted gold plates.

"This is a piece of body-mail such as was worn by the Punic Guard of Patricians."

He pointed to the scrap of hide and to the silver.

"A piece from a shield of lion-skin. Bracelets of Græco-Hispanian workmanship. Well? Well? Well? Where would you think I found these things?"

"The north coast of Africa? Sicily? Spain? Italy?"

He shook his head. Seizing me by the arm, in a whisper he said:

"The Alps!" He leaned back, his eyes afire. He pronounced the word "Hannibal!" and jumping to his feet, in a bellow that rang through the room, cried: "I know—I, Alexandre Grimaux, and none other—I know by which road Hannibal descended into Italy!"

Suddenly he shook his hand in my face.

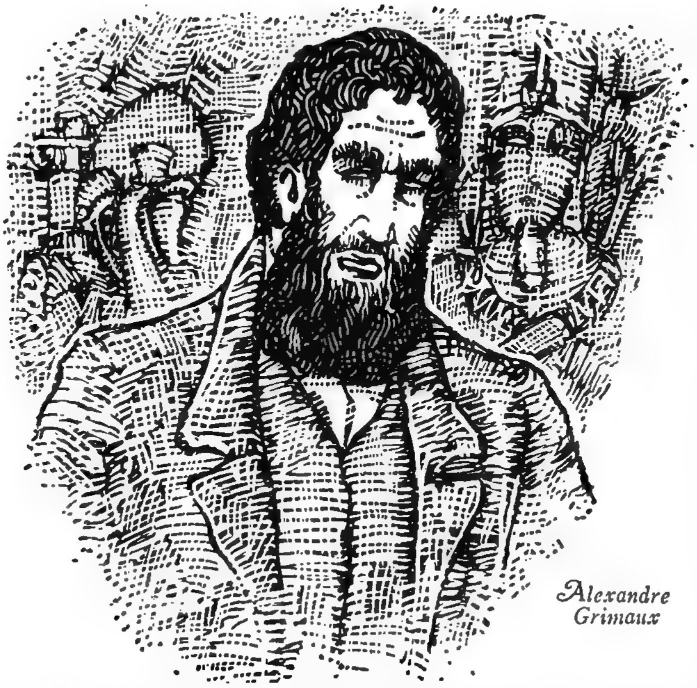
"But understand, I shall not tell you that road—neither you nor anyone else; for they would go there flying. They might find out somehow, from ignorant gossip, the other affair—the affair beside which all this is nothing."

He seated himself again, and with unsteady fingers relighted his cigar. Once more he leaned forward, his brow working, the veins at his temples standing out in knots. And he began:

"It was two years ago this month. Worn out by too much work, I was up there for the sake of the climbing, the high air, the solitude. Just where? That is my secret. To the west, of course. Even you will know that without my telling, since Hannibal had come from the Pyrenees. But not the Mont Genèvre pass! Not the Col d'Argentière! Not Mont Cenis! Another place.

"There, where the mountain-tops begin to fall away toward Italy, is a certain glacier, a valley glacier of extraordinary length and ramifications, that descends from a limited snow-field at a very gentle incline to the moraine—a river of ice that flows today a distance of a few millimetres, tomorrow a few millimetres, and so on through eternity. In it, here and there, is a deep crevasse, where one could easily slip, and die quickly, and be frozen, and thereafter be borne on for centuries, millimetre by inexorably slow millimetre, in the heart of that ancient ice.

"With all its windings, its length, from bergschrund to moraine, must be nearly thirty English miles. It moves slowly even for Swiss ice. I judge it moves at an average of two and a half of your inches in a day. There are 63,360 inches in a mile, and 2131 years ago—say 777,800 days ago——"


Alexandre Grimaux

To be sure, I was listening, but my mind was trying to wander. All the while my thoughts were being drawn toward the room above. Where had I seen that beautiful juxtaposition of features? What was the secret in those deep eyes, that made me feel strangely young, even when they were lighted by a flattering smile? The personality of Mme. Grimaux had not withdrawn at her withdrawal. It permeated the workroom now.

He was saying:

"Some time, when I am tired of life, if I feel like amusing the anthropologists of the future, I shall go up there to the top, to the bergschrund, and have my body boxed and lowered into the crevasse, and travel down gently through the ages. And perhaps, if luck were with science, I would show forth at last through the melting ice of the lower slopes as a fresh relic from another epoch, perfectly preserved by cold, as sound as if I had died the day before. To be sure, in my case they might not get a good idea of the typical twentieth-century man. Perhaps you would do better. Will you give me the disposal of your body?"

He grinned in my face with a sort of strained jocularity. Then he demanded indignantly:

"Are you incredulous so soon? Have you forgotten the mammoths in the frozen soil of the tundra of northern Siberia? When men chopped them out, they were intact. Their bodies were safe from dissolution in that cold storage. One cut steaks from them, cooked and ate their flesh. *Tiens!* A feast brought down for moderns from the Pleistocene Period! But the mammoths, before the ice imprisoned them, were dead." He glared at his big hands, shaking on the edge of the desk as if with palsy, and in a voice of awe, with a profound shudder he repeated, "The mammoths—they were dead."

It was then that it entered my mind: "My first impression was the right one. It is Alexandre who is in need of a little treatment, not Madame Grimaux."

He poured out and gulped down more brandy, then continued:

"I had followed the glacier down from its beginnings almost to its end. I had started up there, in the region of its perennial renewal, the snow-fields, fall upon fall growing deeper and deeper, always more compact, changing from drift to névé, from névé to ice, to the crystalline rock that finally moves forward of its own weight, to join the glacier proper. I had traveled down over its surface, camping beside them, measuring its stealthy progress, comparing the advance of its centre and edges, deducing the nature of its channel from its crevasses at the end of ropes, to observe the stratification caused by the snow-falls of long ago, the changes in granular texture, the depth of dust-holes. For I, who have always found glacier-study a relaxation, was fascinated by this glacier. Why? *Anágke*—it was necessary."

Even now my mind was forced to wander again. What was it about her that was at the same time majestic and pathetic? Loneliness! that was it! Surely there surrounded her an atmosphere of ineffable loneliness which, though exquisitely dissembled, was more moving than any loneliness that I had ever known.

Alexandre tapped me on the arm.

"Not far above the moraine, where an abrupt change in gradient produces many crevasses, I dug out—this."

He bent over, opened a drawer, and laid before me, amid the intaglios and papyrus-scrolls and liqueur-glasses, a skull, crushed, polished as if by graving-tools, but with scraps of dried tissue clinging in its cavities.

I said something emphatic. Alexandre chuckled, it seemed to me, quite ghoulishly.

"Observe it, observe it, *mon cher!* A skull? No doubt; but more than that."

Seizing the thing between his massive hands, he rumbled:

"From what is left of the maxilla, clearly prognathous; narrow; the frontal short; the parietal region uncommonly thick. Well? A prehistoric type, you think? Not at all. The thickness of the dome is not characteristic of prehistoric mountaineers. It is the skull of a negro.

"You may imagine I asked myself, 'What the devil is a negro doing in this galley!' I got him from the wall of a fresh crevasse, not a healed one. Besides, the infinitesimal movement of the ice-granules had polished the bone as you see it. Evidently he had been in there a long, long time. Nearly thirty miles he had come, without a doubt, at the average rate of two and a half inches a day.

"And it was just about 777,800 days ago that Hannibal crossed the Alps with an army of Spaniards and Africans.

"Grand Dieu! as for that moment, you can see my face from here! I ran over the ice. I popped down crevasses before the ropes were fast about me. My guides thought me mad.

"When I became calmer, I marked out a reasonable area, which I explored as best I could. After much toil, danger, and disappointment, I found these other objects."

He waved toward the rust flakes and the pieces of gold and silver.

"Then I knew I had the truth."

Struggling to his feet, he walked with a lurching gait about the room. Behind the lamplight, his bulky shadow filled the wall, his beaked profile intruded on the ceiling. He turned his back to me. Staring across the mummy of Soter's favourite out into the night, he seemed trying to control some extreme emotion.

From the garden a soft breeze, sweet with the perfume of dewy roses, drifted in to us. And with it entered the chirruping of crickets, the song of nightingales, and another sound also, faint, plaintive, like the music of a harp plucked slowly, producing, as it were, unprecedented sequences. No Italian could be making that strange music. It was Mme. Grimaux?

Abruptly, in a thick voice, Alexandre said:

"You can believe what you have heard so far?"

"I believe you."

"Very well. Now I shall tell you the part that you will never believe."

And stumbling over the helmets and the baskets of mosaics, he returned to his chair to take more brandy.

"I felt in my bones that I was going to find more. In such a preservative, they ought to have left a trace or two, an army on the march—a host clambering over mountain-peaks, twenty thousand foot, six thousand horse, mule-trains and swarms of sick, war-elephants and the polyglot herds of camp-followers, the women of the mercenaries, and the concubines of the captains, and the slaves from tribes stamped flat on the way. Imagine all the broken trappings discarded, the weapons smashed in skirmishes and dropped, the paraphernalia too heavy to be carried farther, all the little luxuries, all the loot, that this last great effort made into burdens too cumbrous. And the dead left behind in the drifts.

"Certainly I expected to find other things in the midst of that glacier. Many curious things, abandoned up there amid the snow-fields over two thousand years before, and now approaching the low moraine, and the light of the sun once more.

"We camped beside the glacier, close to my selected spot. We built a hut. Every day, in a swing of ropes, with lantern and ice-hatchet, I peered and pecked in the crevasses. That was a time, my friend! The gloom of those glistening depths! The encircling walls, murky and opaque! The deadly cold! My numb arms, and frozen face, and feverish heart! My head clear, my stomach full of cognac!

"We sank narrow shafts, prolonged the dust-wells, even drove one horizontal gallery a little way into the ice. Now and then a fresh crevasse opened nearby with a crash: the walls heaved and settled; once I barely escaped alive. After that the guides refused to continue. I had paid them like a king, and now they called me crazy. As you may imagine, we quarreled over that. They left me there, all but one, an honest, stupid fellow who had become attached to me. Thereafter it was he who let out the ropes. I went on prying and picking down there alone."

From out of doors the harp-music entered again—a new air—no less strange, ineffably wistful. And the wistfulness of that enigmatic air was somehow related in my mind to the unfathomable wistfulness of the player's eyes.

Alexandre leaned closer.

"One night as I lay in the hut the glacier gave forth a deep, smacking boom. Another crevasse! I went out under the stars, and found it, and peering down into that black, narrow abyss, I told myself, 'If this one discloses nothing, I shall go away.' Next day I descended into it."

His voice failed him. His mouth moved spasmodically. He achieved the words:

"And deep, very deep, close to the surface of its wall, looming through the ice, I saw—" He pressed his eyelids together with a shiver—"I saw a long object like a battered coffer—like a misshapen coffin."

HE MADE a quick gesture, lighted a fresh cigar, and for a while smoked furiously. Out of doors the faint harp-notes died away. He went on in a tone of unnatural calm:

"In two days I had reached this thing, and loosened it from the ice sufficiently to lash it round with ropes. It was a great iron chest, vastly caked with rust, bent and warped by the slow grinding of the glacier, but so far as general cohesion went, intact. Toward evening on the second day we had it out, after breaking the ropes three times, and once nearly being dragged to the bottom of the crevasse. Then, in the dusk, with logs for rollers, we pushed it to the hut.

"How many hours to smash it open? I remember that night as a dream—a dream of almost insupportable exultation, of terrific expectancy, of apprehension that made my scalp tingle and my whole body ill. There comes back to me the ceaseless clanging of steel on iron, the dim lamplight falling on the corrugations of rust, the steam of our freezing breath, the patter of sweat on metal. At last, we ripped off the top, and inside, beneath a shroud of camel-hair fabric, appeared the outline of a human body."

A hush fell between us. He remained motionless, staring at me with that new, uncanny composure, his eyes steady, though filmy and injected with blood, his features firm, yet dripping perspiration.

"See! Among the folds of camel-hair I found a piece of vellum, one side scrawled with maps, the other with writing—Greek, of the dialect of the Pontine coast, second century B.C."

And he recited slowly, in his deep voice that was stirred by vibrations:

" 'On the day of the tumult made by the Celtiberians and the Balearic slingers, in a storm of wind and sleet, she was killed. The rear-guard, maddened by the cold, pushing up through the pass, came clamouring to the general, who was directing the progress of the elephants. All wanted their pay, which was in the great coffer on the shoulders of the trumpeter of Baal. Many threatened to turn back. Others howled at the captains, showing their bones and sores, crying out that the officers should not be fatter and warmer than the privates. The slingers even approached the litters of our women, naming the names of the wretched females who had followed them from Spain, and now were coughing and freezing at the tail of the army. For such scum they wanted the furs, mantles, and braziers of our companions. Of these men the general hewed down the spokesman while we others were still breaking the ice about our sword-hilts. A single javelin was thrown; but that one, glancing from my helmet, entered the curtain of her litter, and pierced her through the shoulder. And we could not stop the blood, so the warmth left her, and she froze to death quickly, and was no more. Later, when the ringleaders had been crucified on the ice, and the money distributed among the rest, I got from the general the great coffer, and laid her in it, and now sink it deep into the snow. Thus Laomedon, son of Cretheus, of Cerasus, captain of the Grecian company, in memory of Nephele called the Golden. From Athens to New Carthage, from New Carthage to these eternal snows, she followed me, renouncing perfumes, flowers, the marble bath, and the riches of her own house, nor was ever dismayed by sun or cold, battle or famine. So the gods punish a too great felicity! These words from a broken heart, which seeks sharp death in the first onset with the Romans. Aphrodite remember that one who served her well, and is now among the shades!' "

Alexandre lowered his head. Out of doors even the crickets were silent.

"And before I drew back the wrappings, I was jealous of that man who had died twenty-one hundred-odd years ago!"

For a while he mused, with vacant eyes, plowing his fingers through his beard, swaying slightly in his chair. Finally he said: "I shall not go on. You would never believe. Think me drunk, but not mad."

Once more he began to wander round the room, lurching against the cabinets and bookcases, fingering in a haphazard way precious, fragile objects that he would never have forgiven himself for dropping. He found himself beside my chair. Clutching my shoulder, he leaned over, and, his last resolution forgotten, mumbled:

"See, thou, she was all white—dead-white from head to foot, eyelids, lips, nails, marble-pallid—all except her golden hair, and a deep wound here in the right pectoralis major, crimson, fresh crimson. Frozen, and as fresh as if she had died yesterday!

"Beautiful? The poignant beauty of a vanished race, all shining there, all saved for the despair of modern eyes, through the long centuries, in the depths of the glacier!

"At that moment I knew that I had never loved anyone else, that I would never love anyone else. All the love of my life went forth to this woman out of the past, this pale perfection that had not stirred since our countries ceased to be wildernesses. For me she epitomized the far-off ages for which I had always yearned—their beauty, their spirit, their strange secrets, their whole obliterated knowledge. It was as if all I had ever longed for lay there embodied, how close, and yet how completely inaccessible, baffling with its white immobility the communion I had always dreamed of. In that hour I was bereaved of the one woman and the one reason for existence."

Alexandre regained his chair, and poured out more brandy.

"THAT NIGHT! A storm had come up. The hut shook; the light flickered; hail rattled on the roof; thunder reëchoed from the heights. In a storm she had died, and in another storm——

"My poor wretch of a guide was crouching in a corner, praying. This business had broken down his nerves. I, for my part, knelt beside her, staring and staring. Perhaps I wept. No doubt. Maybe I kissed her lips. Who can say?

"I am not sure when the idea, the insane inspiration, began to grow in my brain—" He leaned over to take my nerveless hand— "Look here, do you remember our studies together in the university? How often you sat there beside me while I was busy with my biology and vivisection? Have you forgotten Blondell, who in 1825 proved that animals apparently dead from loss of blood could be revived within a limited time by transfusion? Do you recall those dogs I bled to death, and resuscitated, within the five-minute limit, with Aveling's apparatus, by new blood from other dogs? All those processes, the direct and the indirect, the auto-transfusion by ligatures, and so on? And the monkey I froze solid, after draining his veins sufficiently to relieve the pressure when his blood congealed, and brought to life next day by warming and a new infusion? There in the hut beside the glacier I remembered all that."

His voice fell, as if he were afraid of what he was going to say:

"An exsanguinated patient who had been frozen swiftly, whose every fibre was undoubtedly the same as at the moment of freezing, one day for the monkey, seven hundred and seventy-seven thousand-odd days for the woman. What difference? In such cold, flesh remains the same forever.

"I went to work. Imagine, for example——"

He began to laugh, at first with eery softness, soon wildly, rocking from side to side in the throes of an hysteria the more dreadful because it racked so big and strong a man. I came round to him quickly, caught him by the shoulders, began to shake him.

"Alexandre, be still!"

"Ho! ho! ho! Ho! ho! ho! Imagine that wretched hut, the laboratory for the most tremendous operation man has ever seen! Ho ho! ho!"

His demonic hoots resounded. Through the ceiling came the scraping of a chair. *She* had heard him? *She* was coming down? If she entered that door now! My teeth began to chatter. My scalp stirred. I went on shaking him desperately. Our shadows, swaying back and forth, glided over the walls in monstrous shape over the glimmering shelves, over the mummy on the table by the windows, which seemed, in that alternation of light and gloom, to be stirring, to be writhing into life.

"Alexandre! Alexandre!"

ALL AT ONCE he was silent. He reached for his glass, but I held his hand away. For a time his deep chest heaved. Then he said distinctly, in an ordinary tone:

"Do you know, in that hut there was nothing proper to work with—nothing, absolutely. If I had only had Aveling's machine, or even Roussel's, or a big hypodermic. But nothing! Indirect transmission, of course, with every danger of infection, of air, of inadequate assistance.

"I routed out my guide. While he was heaping logs on the fire, I explored my medicine-case. Disinfecting-tablets, sterilized gauze, a lancet, by the grace of God a vial of carbonate of ammonia crystal for inhalation in the high altitudes, some teacups of enameled tin, a bit of waxed paper capable of being twisted into a funnel, quill tooth-picks, adhesive tape to bind the quill to the funnel—those were my instruments!

"But for a long time I waited. In transfusion, nervous agitation in the donor is sometimes fatal to the patient. I determined to be calm. It was my will to be calm. At last I think I was.

"When the blazing logs before which I had laid her already threatened to char the roof, I made a half-inch incision in my median basilic vein, and let six or seven ounces run into the tea-cups. I bound up my arm, defebrinated the blood by whipping it with twigs and straining it through gauze. I added a solution of ammonia. Over the spirit-lamp I brought this mixture to 110 degrees Fahrenheit. I was a trifle faint by then, *mon ami,* and somewhat unsteady. It was fortunate that the heat had not yet done its part.

"The roof caught fire. We beat out the flames. The rigidity began to leave her limbs. How long? What is time, or the march of events, at a time like that?

"My guide returned to his corner, and groveled there, gibbering. He believed he had got the devil for a master. At last—at last with my lancet I uncovered the cephalic vein of her left arm, and with a tiny twig for a director raised it. I inserted the quill attached to the funnel. I began the transfusion ounce by ounce, with fifteen-minute intervals.

"The roof caught again. The guide rose, and fought the fire like a man in a delirium.

"In the end the wound in her shoulder became active! I packed it with gauze. I bandaged her limbs to localize the blood-supply about the central organs. I began to exercise her lungs.

"Look! Look! On her lips a faint colour! An hour, an eternity of the most terrible suspense, and her body began almost imperceptibly to quiver from the natural result, the chill. To quiver! To move of itself! She was alive.

"It was then that my guide rushed out into the storm, screaming, and cast himself down the glacier.

"To weeks later I found a mountaineer, whom I sent for help. Men came with a stretcher. We took her down into the lowlands."

Perhaps a minute passed in which neither of us moved. The nightingales resumed their song. The moon had risen; its light poured in through the windows to bathe in silvery-green radiance the mummy on the table and the images of obsolete divinities. A sigh broke the stillness. Then Alexandre's voice went on:

"If the soul exists, where had that soul been? What regions did it relinquish at the command of the reviving body? With what regrets, blotted out from consciousness at reëntrance into the flesh?

"One who has loved can doubtless love again, and in new places; but old loves persist in memory. Better perhaps not to wake, when waking means remembrance of what is lost.

"But man thinks of his own heart first, as woman, more often than not, thinks first of man's, comforting, reassuring, pretending, out of her vast gentleness and charity, while concealing deep within her a pitiable despair. Who knows?

"At least I have lived a life such as no man ever lived before. My wildest longings have been realized. I have merged myself, as it were, with the past I love so well. Hand in hand with a sure guide, I have retraced my way across obliterated paths to remote days. The moon has risen for me over the roofs of Athens. My ship has drawn in beneath the starlit bulk of Carthage. I have supped and marched with the great dead. I have heard the songs of a world that is gone, that no other will ever hear—the elegiac melodies of the Lydian flute, the lyric utterances of the seven-stringed lyre, without which Pindar, Anacreon, Simonides, Bacchylides are a sealed book. I live amid the sounds and odours, the knowledge and very presence, of the past.

And all the while, in the midst of a frightful delight, I have a frightful apprehension; for I have outraged nature, destiny, the sane progress of the universe. What will happen to me for that?

"BUT THAT OTHER! Where is he? Close by, invisible in the shadows? Is he calling now? Could that heart of hers, purified by its long absence in unknown spaces, be half aware of such a message? Is it just as a prisoner that I keep her here, a being brought back by force, smiling at her captor with the sad wisdom of one whose inner self knows everything, bearing the chains of this poor, human selfishness with the meekness of a divine comprehension?"

He wept, the tears running down into his beard.

"Nearly every night I find her out there, looking through the darkness toward the old places. No doubt she is there at this moment."

He stood erect, and staggered into the pergola. Below, amid the roses, her tall shape stood motionless. Her gaze was turned toward the east. Alexandre went toward her, his hands outstretched, sobbing:

"No more tonight! No more!"

Turning, she caught him in her white arms. His head sank upon her shoulder: his grief was muffled by her breast. So she supported him, swaying, but standing upright. Her face showed like a mask, ineffably beautiful, of Pity herself.

I heard his smothered voice:

"Be content! For charity, say thou wilt be content——"

Her eyes met mine. They remained, as before, shining with that sublime, sad gentleness. She addressed him very softly:

"Come! To bed."

But he went on, shaken by his paroxysm:

"The crime I have committed against thee!"

"Be silent now! Come, my dear husband! To bed."

She led him into the house.

Deranged?

It is possible, of course, that just at that time he was suffering from some nervous breakdown, full of imaginings related to his work and dreams. But there remained the mystery of the woman, which is still a mystery to me.

Was it coincidence, or a cue for a whole fabric of delusion on his part, that on her left arm, somewhere, I should judge, in the region of the cephalic vein, one saw a tiny scar which marred an otherwise perfect surface—a scar not yet altogether white?

The Ladies' Battle

Lady Seymour, granddaughter of the playwright Sheridan (1751-1816), and Queen of Beauty at the Eglinton Tournament, exchanges notes concerning a maid servant with Lady Shuckburgh.

I

Lady Seymour presents her compliments to Lady Shuckburgh, and would be obliged to her for the character of Mary Steadman, who states that she has lived twelve months, and still is, in Lady Shuckburgh's establishment. Can Mary Steadman cook plain dishes well, and make bread, and is she honest, sober, willing, cleanly, and good tempered? Lady Seymour will also like to know the reason she leaves Lady Shuckburgh's house. Direct under care to Lord Seymour, Meriden Bradley, Wiltshire.

II

Lady Shuckburgh presents her compliments to Lady Seymour; her ladyship's letter, dated October 28th, only reached her yesterday, November 3rd. Lady Shuckburgh was unacquainted with the name of the kitchen-maid until mentioned by Lady Seymour, as it is her custom neither to apply for, nor give, characters to any of the under servants, this being always done by the housekeeper, Mrs. Couch, and this was well known to the young woman. Therefore Lady Shuckburgh is surprised at her referring any lady to her for a character. Lady Shuckburgh, keeping a professed cook, as well as a housekeeper, in her establishment, it is not very probable she herself should know anything of the abilities or merits of the under servants; she is therefore unable to reply to Lady Seymour's note. Lady Shuckburgh cannot imagine Mary Steadman to be capable of cooking anything, except for the servants' hall table. *November 4th.*

III

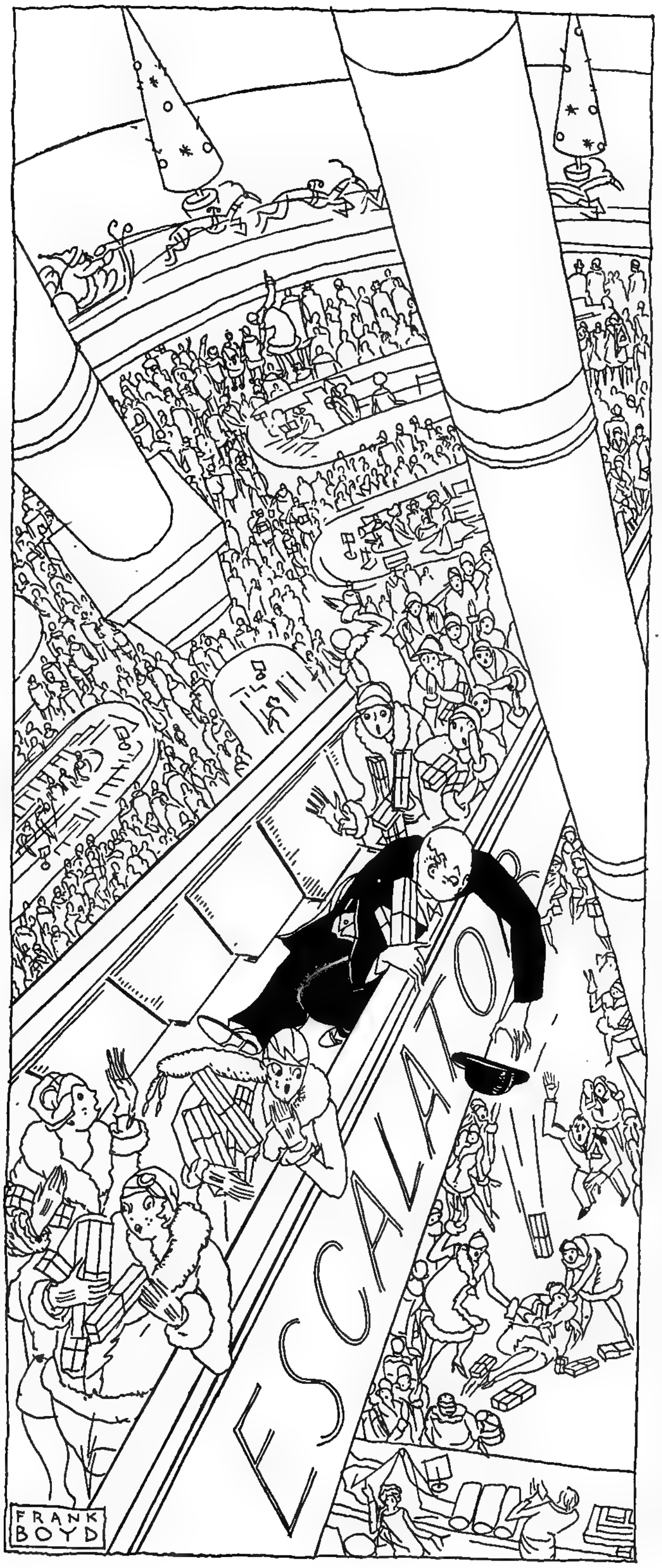
Lady Seymour presents her compliments to Lady Shuckburgh, and begs she will order her housekeeper, Mrs. Couch, to send the girl's character, otherwise another young woman will be sought for elsewhere, as Lady Seymour's children cannot remain without their dinners because Lady Shuckburgh, keeping a professed cook and housekeeper, thinks a knowledge of the details of her establishment beneath her notice. Lady Seymour understands from Steadman that, in addition to her other talents, she was actually capable of cooking food for the little Shuckburghs to partake of when hungry.

IV

Madam—Lady Shuckburgh has directed me to acquaint you that she declines answering your note, the vulgarity of which she thinks beneath her contempt; and although it may be characteristic of the Sheridans to be vulgar, coarse, and witty, it is not that of a lady, unless she chances to have been *born in a garret and bred in a kitchen.* Mary Steadman informs me that your ladyship does not keep either a cook or a housekeeper, and that you only require a girl who can cook a mutton chop; if so, I apprehend that Mary Steadman, or any *other scullion,* will be found fully equal to the establishment of the Queen of Beauty. I am, Madam, your Ladyship's etc., etc.

Elizabeth Couch.

But Once a Year



THE CALENDAR SEEMS to me a shocking device. My mechanical days had been flowing along in a staccato stream. By this alone I had heretofore been aware of the "holidays." Business had speeded up. Hours clicked off like the flick of a kodak-shutter. It was dark and it was light with about the same promptitude. One moment I was rushing through cold, blue-lamped streets to a steam-heated supper under reflected lighting, the next I was going down in an elevator, to be swallowed up by a subway and a business day. I was busy, but my peculiar niche in business did not necessitate constant consultation of the calendar. Therefore when I suddenly looked at it one morning it smote me with the horror of a flashlight "taking" a yacht-club banquet. It was December 20.

The calendar is peculiarly heartless. December 20 was a Thursday. Further than that the blank desk-pad would vouchsafe no solace to my suddenly feverish mental activity. You know why. You know what I was thinking. There was Aunt Emma.

Yes, Aunt Emma; Uncle Josiah; Second Cousin Amiel; his sister; the Lubbocks, of course; Uncle Ephraim Potter; James Nagle! Lillian Nagle! Norman Monument; Cousin Clara; Great-Aunt Anna Amusement; the Peacocks, next door; and the Chauncey Rogers, and the Infields, and the McWhalens.

"The gift without the giver is bare." Lowell was right. Clammy fear had clasped my vitals. And yet suddenly the upper cardiac region had begun to experience a rosy glow. I was very busy. Yes, but I consigned business to Gehenna. *This* Christmas— It was twelve o'clock noon when I started.

They all had to be appropriate, of course, I said to myself as I dived into the subway. The subway ejected me like Jonah, at the basement of a large department store. "Jonah" is substantially correct. I moved into that heaving sea.

". . . as if other folks were made o' *putty!*" said a glare in my direction. But I beamed with the happy Christmas spirit. Then there was a counter before me, and it was all scattered over with such lovely handkerchiefs. They were so *dégagé,* rumpled in all sorts of interesting fashions, and some of them were so interestingly decorated with thumb-marks. There were some retiring blue and pink ribbons visible among them. I lifted a handkerchief by one corner and was for shaking it out. I was wondering whether Cousin Clara would not like a set of hand— But some one very irritatingly snickered. They were not handkerchiefs. I knew that Cousin Clara would not appreciate it—from me. The tide billowed me on.

There was a comparative backwater among a lot of very shiny tin buckets. I could not think of anyone who would like a tin bucket. Uncle Ephraim, with his name stenciled, surrounded by forget-me-nots? No. Then there were cogged machines with handles. One was a clothes-wringer or a meat-chopper. Suddenly all of my relatives seemed to be vegetarians and to exist in a state of nature. At any rate, this was certainly not the kind of thing one either gave or received. It was too useful. I was borne past a field of waving, yellow brooms and Bustle carpet-sweepers,

By
WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

William Rose Benét

without a pang. Out from a covert of kitchen graniteware I made for the elevator.

It was impossible to get out at the intended floor. I beat upon the amazons about me, but was only crushed the closer. Stout Cortez's feminine counterpart broke up the interference, however, at the seventh level. I felt again the firm floor beneath my feet. That is, until I began to trip over extra rugs. Rugs are very tenacious. They have one of the properties of air, inertia. Especially when rolled. There were a great many of them. There were men unrolling them and showing them. There were ladies sitting on and before them and inspecting them through lorgnons and lorgnettes. I, too, was sitting upon a pile of rugs. Even if I could have thought of anyone on my list who needed a rug—rugs are so expensive.

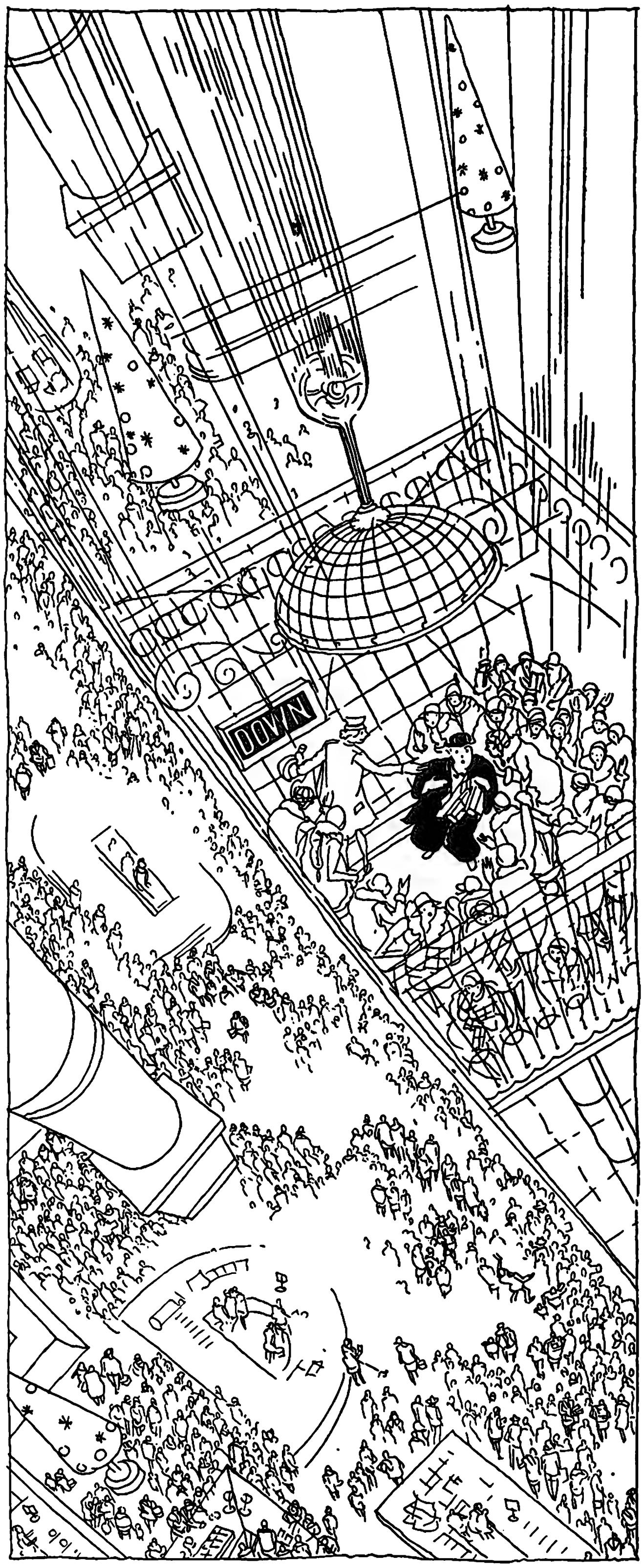
You can get curtain-poles on that floor, too. Some of them open like accordions. Where there are no rugs, there are slippery floors; one skates. And then if the clerk is showing an extension curtain-rod to a dowager as one rounds the counter——

My right eye persisted in watering, and the skin on my left shin was really considerably abraded. The elevator would not disgorge me again until the restaurant floor, and there is nothing but a picture-gallery there. The pictures were for sale, but I could not think of anybody who cared anything for such pictures. Some of them were very moving, of course: the picture of the young man, in the degenerate topper, pink tail-coat, and jockey-boots, kissing the girl with curls and a blue-satin directoire, in the rose-arbour, with the fox-terrier in the background. Or there was one of "Baby's First Lesson." All the frames were prettily gilded. I was quite attracted by them myself.

I decided to descend the staircase. Then I came to what they called a "bridge," and crossed to another part of the store. There were some very stunning dresses hanging up in endless rows. There were plenty of mirrors. There were some ladies. I remembered the handkerchief episode, and I stepped into an elevator where the globe blushed an angry red.

You can't give your neighbour's wife a pair of shoes. Why did my own go to Bermuda with the children? I know the Lubbocks detest photography, and the last thing I should think of giving Aunt Anna Amusement would be a wrist-watch. One of the very handsome Oriental vases I picked out finally for Bob Griffin proved to be a store ornament. There are always pairs of gloves, pairs of stockings, if you know the sizes. I didn't! Of course, if you're going to be extravagant! I didn't see anything except a pig-skin trunk for John Nagle, and that was fifty dollars.

Your head gets to whirring like a clock always just about to strike, and your eyes begin to film slowly. You buy something useful, like a package of carpet-tacks or a nail-file, and continue to rotate in the whirlpool. Faint shrieks of insane laughter fitfully rise and fall about you. It's a good deal like the ending of a Russian novel.



It was 5:30, quite dark and auto-headlight-lit, when I slid into the street. The surface cars looked as if gigantic bees were swarming on them. I thought of the papers on my desk at the office. I had thought that in an extra half-hour— But I did get something awfully nice for Second Cousin Amiel. You know those plain silver-plated photograph frames?

Drawings by
Ruth King

Matches

WEATHER IS the villain of this story.

The early-morning March sun, careless and debonair, shone through scattered clouds upon the packing of nine persons into the seven-passenger auto stage, and upon the loading of the stage's trailer with cases and miscellaneous articles for far-off ranchers and squatters and homesteaders, and with the furniture and boxes and trunks belonging to Frances Stead and Louise Elmhurst, the two women passengers, who were setting out on the adventure of taking up land in the Great West.

The stage had just begun its journey along the Bison Skull Trail when Little Willie, the six-foot driver, bethought himself of a commission.

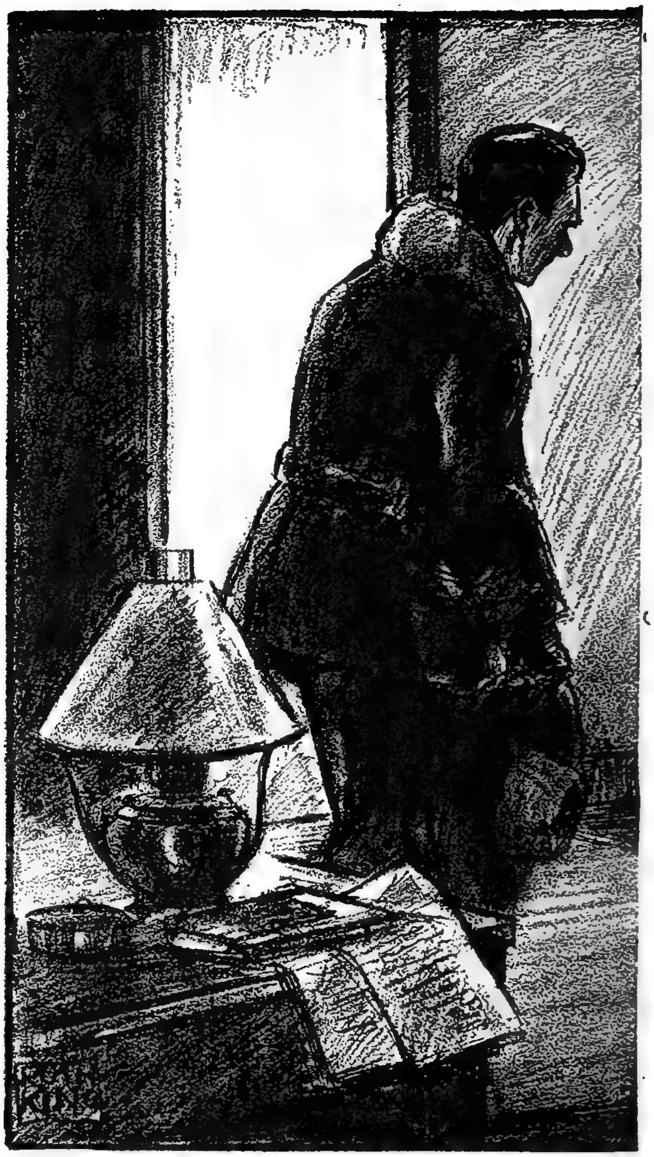
"Lee Dodd, he give me a letter for you girls. Most forgot it."

Without slackening the speed of the car, he extricated from a remote pocket a much crumpled note, the reading of which was achieved with difficulty in the lurching machine.

> Ladies [ran the letter], I wouldn't of let You Ladies buy my Relinkishment even for $150$, onley the Land agent Said you got some Capitle, enouf to go Home east Winters. This country aint no place for a Porr man or enybody specially Ladies after november But I fixed the Place clean for you and Dug some coal out a butte and Theres a pile of Sage brush ready that will keep fires for a while the Stove Draws good. I hauled a Barrel of water it is Froze now. You Haf to melt it. I here some Ladies done pretty good Once on a homestead and I hope You will.
>
> Your Snerely [this was crossed out] Truley
>
> LEE DODD

Dr. Calhoun, a tall, thin, clear-eyed young man with a whimsical mouth, shared the back seat with the two young women. He studied their faces as they deciphered the missive. At once he liked them—especially Miss Stead. Miss Elmhurst, tall, dark, dreamy-eyed, was doubtless an "interesting girl," but a slight preoccupation, even as she read the letter, suggested a dominant far-away interest, excluding him. Miss Stead, in contrast, was so imminently present. He liked what he called to himself the "good weather-beaten look of her face." It expressed the vigour of her personality. Her deep blue eyes, her high colour, her smooth light hair, her clear voice—clean-cut and quick, yet soft—engaged his fancy. He wanted to hear her speak again.

"Lee Dodd discouraged you?" he asked.



He knew only that there was a hard fight ahead. . . .

"Why, no. Do you know him?" asked Frances.

"Next-door neighbour. That is, two miles from my place."

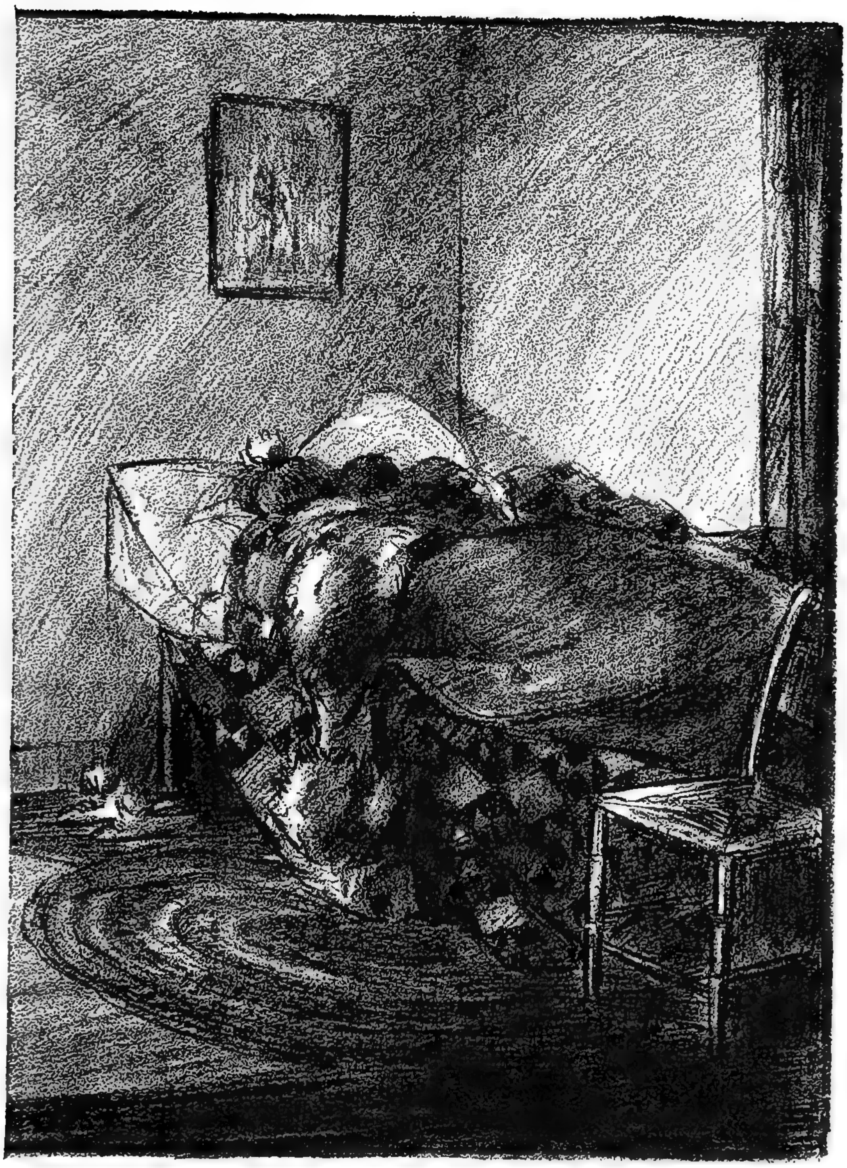
"And now we're your neighbours."

She looked at him, thinking it fortunate to meet so attractive a Westerner at the outset of their adventure. Perhaps, she warned herself, beating out the sudden spark of too glowing an interest, perhaps it was only his broad-brimmed hat and his tan and his eyes and the way his ears set.

Meanwhile Louise was handing him the letter and asking,—

"Is it as desolate as it sounds?"

It depended on the weather, the doctor replied. They should really have waited till the middle or end of April to begin their homesteading. March was tricky, a bad gamble. Lee Dodd's shack was not built for cold weather. The doctor himself had a "soddy," but even so preferred the city through March. Still, plenty of families lived their winters in tar-paper shacks. With plenty of wood and coal and warm clothing, they could probably keep going.



He must do more than save the lives of the two girls.

By

VIOLA
PARADISE

Viola Paradise

He sized them up as game. Frances, obviously, was the hardier of the two. He knew, or imagined he knew, what she had looked like as a baby, and what, in the matronly years to come, she would look like. He hoped nothing would ever happen to spoil the serious yet up-cornered mouth. She would be the rare old lady whose grandchildren would visit her, not as a duty, but from choice. And she would manage to keep ahead of them, the young scamps.

At this point in his reverie, the doctor caught himself. Why, the girl couldn't be much over twenty-two or twenty-three, and here he was, almost jealous of her grandchildren. Ridiculous! He grinned at his folly, but did not abate his interest.

Of the other passengers, two cowboys took turns sitting on each other's lap in the front seat next to the driver. A cross-roads storekeeper and a sheep-herder shared the two small folding seats in the tonneau with a nervous fat man, whose ampleness spanned the space between the two seats and abutted precariously upon their edges. As the car twisted and lurched in the frozen ruts of the trail, one side of the fat man would occasionally slip down and get wedged between the seats. The first time this happened, it caused hilarious merriment. But, "God, this is no time to laugh!" he exclaimed. "My wife may be dying!" And despite the absurd irrelevance of this comment, the laughter ceased, for it was known that he had come a hundred miles to get a doctor.

Along the Bison Skull Trail the stage bumped and twisted its way, in and out, among buttes and bad lands. Dwellings were seldom to be seen. The great potent emptiness of the brown rolling country, patched here and there with drifts of old snow, dotted now and again with cattle and sheep grazing in the more sheltered places, had to the two women a stark and terrible grandeur. The end of March was at hand, but no hint of spring was in the land. The mottling of sunshine and cloud-shadows brought out subtle colourings, and relieved somewhat the threat of somberness. "It's the kind of country," thought Louise to herself, "that reaches out and gets hold of you, for all that it looks so hard and inhospitable and uncompromising. It throws a spell, and you belong to it."

Partly to throw off this very spell, partly to make conversation, Frances remarked,—

"This is going to be the kind of day that's crisp and cold about the edges, and soft and warm in the middle."

"You a warranted weather prophet?" asked a cowboy.

"I hear they guarantee weather prophets like the rest of the mail-order supplies in the East," said the storekeeper, who nursed a special grievance against the mail-order business.

The doctor explained: "It takes a brave man to prophesy March weather out in this country!"

Whereupon the fat man queried anxiously, "You don't think the weather'll delay us?"

To which a unanimous chorus of "Hope not" gave him dubious comfort.

But soon the fickle sun was cringing before a fierce, threatening wind, and the temperature began to drop. The car's side-curtains were put up to keep out the gale. The isinglass patches in the curtains were opaque with dust and mud, and a neat circle, five inches in diameter, directly in front of the driver, was the only transparent part of the wind-shield. Deprived of the landscape, the passengers' attention turned upon one another. A few questions were asked and answered. Conversation did not flourish, however. The fat man's anguish, the wringing of his hands, his impatience for more speed, his frequent appeals to the doctor for impossible assurances, sat heavily upon the spirits of the company. He seemed to resent the doctor's interest in the two women, as if that were delaying the car's progress.

The journey grew more and more uncomfortable. The trail, nowhere good, became rougher, more twisting, with sudden steep ascents and descents. The wind shook and buffeted the car. The temperature fell with malevolent persistence. The passengers shrank huddled into their wraps, stamped their feet, rubbed their hands, and made other vain attempts to get warm.

At noon, when they drew up at the Half-way House, the fat man wrung his hands anew. "Good God!" he cried, "this is no time to eat. Look at the weather! My wife——"

"Say!" exclaimed a hungry cowboy, "your baby ain't the only kid ever born in this country! Can't you cut your groaning for a while?"

But the doctor interrupted curtly with "Pull in your teeth, Teddy. You're not married."

"Righto!" retorted the cowboy with good-nature. "You ain't, neither. I vote we let the girls decide. . . . Do we eat—or don't we?"

Dinner was foregone.

About three o'clock in the afternoon the stage wrenched itself out of the trail-ruts, and turned onto the rough, trackless prairie.

"Your outfit's along here somewhere soon," said a cowboy.

THE FAT MAN GROANED anew at the delay which this stop meant. "Will it take long to get their things off the trailer?" he asked, almost resentfully.

No, it would take only a few minutes. Presently the stage stopped. Everyone got out of the car and bent against the wind to the task of unloading furniture and trunks and boxes. The fat man, helpless and awkward in his very eagerness to be of help, almost wept at the delay. This was less than five minutes, but the consciousness of a sick woman forty miles beyond made it seem a long time.

"Don't bother to untie anything!" exclaimed Frances. "We can do everything ourselves. Yes, we have tools, matches, everything. Yes, of course we can put up the beds!"

"I'm sorry," said the fat man gratefully, as he climbed into the car. "If it wasn't for my wife——"

"Yes, yes, all right, hurry off!" Louise and Frances cried at the same time.

And with shouts of "Good luck!" "We'll come and see you soon," and the like, the stage was off. Louise and Frances were alone with their property.

It was too cold to stay outside long enough to get the first proper impression of the little tar-paper shack. That it was a tiny black speck in the vast boundless landscape; that no other dwelling was in sight; that the wooden strips holding the tar-paper in place were nailed on at neat intervals; that a small stovepipe stuck out of the curving roof at a rakish angle—these things they took in at a glance, and called the place "cunning."

They hurried inside, and threw their arms about each other.

"O Fran! it *is* really true! We're here. I never entirely believed it, even on the way!"

"But let's light the fire before we do anything. I'm frozen brittle!" exclaimed Frances. "Now let's see. The matches are in the box marked Food. You open that, while I start on the bedding."

"Here's the food-box," replied Louise. "Wow! these tools are cold."

She pried open the lid of the box. The odour of tea and coffee, the sight of many small boxes and cans, were heartening.

"No matches here," said Louise, blithely. "Have another guess."

"Oh, yes, they're there. You're probably looking for a small box. It's a big one—a year's supply. I saw him put it in myself."

At last, "Here it is." Then, "No, this is too heavy. It's soap."

"Can't be," replied Fran. "The soap's in a box by itself." Yet she left the case she was unpacking, and came over to inspect the box where the matches should have been.

"Why, we didn't order that kind of soap!" she exclaimed. "Anyhow, how absurd to pack soap with food! It's a mistake. The matches *must* be in this box, for I told him to put them there, so that we could have a fire and food as soon as we got here. The box is the same size——"

Here Frances broke off, and caught a quick breath, disturbed at a sudden memory: for when she was ordering the groceries, a woman from a laundry had come hurrying into the store for some soap. And Frances, because her order was a long one and would take some time, had let the grocer wait on the other woman. What if the grocer had sent the matches to the woman—her heart gave a sudden turn, but her mind darted away from the fear.

"He must have packed the matches in another box," she said. "We'll have to open them all, till we come to them."

"I move we have a cup of tea, first," said Louise.

"Righto! I'll chop some ice from the frozen water-barrel, and we can melt——"

At that moment it flashed upon them both that fire was essential to tea. They laughed, Frances a bit hollowly. Louise, not realizing the terrible possibility *that there might not be any matches*, enjoyed the joke.

"It's like the Walrus and the Carpenter! 'And this was very odd, because there weren't any matches.' I'll have to write that to Jim. He's probably sizzling down there on his old Equator. Just think, Fran, what very nice warm work building bridges over the Equator must be!"

Jim was the man Louise was to marry, after his engineering exploit was finished. And every experience was something to write to Jim. Frances sometimes thought that Louise lived entirely as a sort of preface, savouring life only as it could be passed on to Jim.

Although their feet and fingers ached with cold, and every breath was visible in the chill room, the exercise of unpacking warmed them a little. They worked with their outdoor wraps on. By half-past four it was beginning to get dark. Despite the cold, Louise seemed in high spirits.

"'Adventure One—The Mislaid Match,'" she said. "That would be a good title for a story. O Fran, why don't we write our adventures? We're going to have them wholesale. The ride out was almost an adventure, with the poor worried fat man, and all. I hope they got to his wife in time. 'The Rigours of Ranching' wouldn't be a bad title. It would be awful to get sick out here. I'm glad we're both husky, although it would be convenient for the present to have a delicate appetite. If we don't find the matches soon, I'll begin on raw food. You know, we had no lunch."

Frances was weighing the possibility of not finding the matches. Half an hour would bring darkness. The beds had not been put up yet. She did not wish to communicate her fear to Louise; but finally she suggested that it would not be a bad idea to begin on raw food, and get one bed ready before dark, on the chance that they might not find the matches till the next day.

The stiff frozen bread crumbled when they cut it. They opened a can of beans, and of sardines, and found them both frozen solid.

"I knew it was cold, but I didn't realize it was *this* cold!" said Louise, as they broke the frozen food into small chunks. "You suck a bean and a sardine till they melt; then you slip them between your chattering teeth, and the temperature does the rest. Quite a technique! This *is* an adventure!"

But despite their hunger, they could eat very little of the frozen food. They turned greedily, however, to some cakes of chocolate.

"What next?" asked Louise, when they had finished. "We can't wash the dishes, because there's no water. Besides, it's too dark to do anything. I move we shiver to bed and get warm. Oh, I say, we can't even wash ourselves, or brush our teeth!"

"From furs to flannelette," said Frances, attempting a joke. "We'll need flannelette nightgowns. See, it's begun to snow!"

It was all but dark outside. A mad and furious wind raged, driving fine helpless snowflakes from the last vestiges of twilight into the blackness of night. It had the momentum of infinite distances, uncurbed. Amazing that the little frame shack, with its single thickness of tar-paper, could withstand it!

"How terrifying this wind would be on the lonely moors of England, in a Hardy novel!" exclaimed Louise, as the two girls, quaking with cold, undressed.

Frances repressed an impulse to say that it was more terrifying here and now. She felt just the least impatience with Louise's habit of interpreting everything for its literary value, or for its interest to Jim. But she remembered that Louise did not know about the woman who had interrupted her order just when she was buying the matches; that Louise did not know that there might be no matches, and that the possibility of freezing to death was more than a literary contingency. And Louise must not know this till the last possible minute—some time tomorrow.

Undressing and slipping between the cold sheets was like a penance. But, having had time to put up only one bed, they had piled all their bedding on it, and they counted on this extra covering, and on the heat from their bodies, to get them warm.

It was too early to go to sleep. Waiting for warmth, they talked. They discussed the arrangement of the room. "Let's get it all fixed up tomorrow, and take some pictures, and I'll send them to Jim with the first person who goes by. O Fran, I wish you had a Jim to be sending things to!"

"It is customary, I believe, to wait till after marriage before patronizing and pitying your old-maid friends," laughed Frances. In her heart she was thinking, "Poor Louise! She has so much to live for. And poor Jim! But we must keep laughing as long as we can, now." Aloud she continued, "The room is larger than I thought. What would you say were the dimensions?"

Louise guessed twenty-five by thirty. Frances laughed. "Never: twenty-two by twenty-six, at the most."

Louise said that rooms ought to come in figures divisible by five. They nonsensed on, waiting for warmth. Notwithstanding the number of covers, they were warm only where their bodies touched. Sharp cold draughts pried their way into the bed. They could not get warm. Frances finally found courage to get out onto the icy floor, snatch their coats, furs, and sweaters, and pile these on top of the bed. She scrambled back under the covers, quaking with cold. The extra covering apparently had no effect.

After a few hours, Louise fell into a restless sleep. But Frances could not sleep. It was not only the cold that kept her awake. There was black panic and fear. And when at last she could shake a part of her mind free of panic, she began weighing the possibilities of freezing to death: wondering how long it took; wondering if the weather would change; wondering if anyone would happen by their shack; wondering if, by any mad chance, the stage would come out of its course, and go past their homestead on its way back to the city; wondering if, by striking two pieces of metal together, she could start a fire. Boy Scouts, she had heard, learned how to do that. It was not as if it were a wet cold. Perhaps, if she cut some tiny shavings, and chopped them fine——

Would the doctor stop on his way back to the city? She had liked the doctor.

She knew that she was in no way responsible for the accident. That had happened in spite of more than ordinary care. She had checked over all the supplies; the grocer had pointed to a package and had said, "Matches." Yet a feeling of responsibility troubled her. The idea of homesteading had been hers. She had suggested it to Louise as an interesting thing to do during Jim's absence. She had argued against the objections of Louise's family, and had persuaded them that it was a safe and sane project. Somehow, now, she must pull Louise through.

The other stage passengers had said they would come to see them soon. How soon? She hoped the doctor would be the first to come.

She tried to recall all the stories she had read about Arctic explorations. She could remember no details, only general impressions that one could stay alive for days; that after the pain came a numbness, and then a torpor. The thing to do, if the feeling of numbness came, was to stay awake.

What would Louise say when she realized the situation? Louise was of a temperament always on the crest or in the trough of the wave. Most of the time, especially since her engagement, she had been on the crest. Frances felt it almost a mission to keep her on the crest. However black the outlook, she must see that Louise should cling fast to hope.

Louise

When Louise awoke at daybreak, Frances had a plan. Louise should stay in bed while Frances opened the trunks and got out their warmest underwear. No need for two of them to fumble around in the cold room before they were dressed.

"By the way," Louise interrupted, "can't you do a little weather prophesying today? You were right about the edges, yesterday, but it certainly was not soft and warm in the middle."

Frances lifted her head from the pillow to look out the window. "Why, there's nothing but snow in the world. It's drifted up to our window-sill. If the sun comes out we'll have a great dazzle!"

"That's a safe prophecy," laughed Louise. "I could do almost as well myself. But keep your head down close to the pillow. A hurricane has just intruded. I suppose I have feet, but I can hardly feel them."

THEY LAY A WHILE, shivering, yet savouring the few patches of warmth their bodies made; not daring to change their positions, for fear of contact with a cold part of the bed. Frances delayed the getting up as long as possible; every moment's delay was just one moment's more hope for Louise. For herself, too. After all, there might be matches. She had traveled far from the fierce fear that there might not be any, to the faint hope of the opposite. It was a hard downward traveling. At the bottom of the road stood despair, beckoning. Louise, luckily, had not yet passed even the first signpost of fear. Extremely uncomfortable, she was taking a perverse enjoyment in her discomfort; it would make such a good story to tell.

Frances insisted that they each put on three suits of underwear, and three pairs of stockings; and Louise, though she thought the idea absurd, since they would surely find the matches presently, consented. That too would make a good tale to write to Jim. Frances then suggested that one of them look for the matches, while the other put things away and set the house in order. Things in their present disorder were so confusing that one could never be quite sure whether or not a box had been searched for the matches. Besides—and this was sheer invention on Frances's part—a neighbour might drop in at any moment.

So, after a breakfast of bread and butter and sweet chocolate, they set to work, Louise hunting for the matches, Frances putting things away, arranging their belongings, and frequently calling Louise from her task, to consult on the placing of some article, to help move something heavy, to hand Frances some tool as she stood perched on the convertible chair-step-ladder, hanging the attractive cretonne curtains. Chatting gaily, she seized every possible pretext to prolong the hunt for the matches.

Lee Dodd had left the shack neat and clean. Save for the brightly polished stove, it had been empty. But in the course of her explorations Frances found on a high shelf a baby's shoe and a lady's pink garter. Here was food for speculation. (This will keep me talking quite a while, thought Frances to herself.) They had assumed Lee Dodd's bachelorhood. Was there then a Mrs. Lee Dodd? From his letter and from his singular replies, they tried to reconstruct the man and his possible family.

But in the midst of the discussion Louise stopped short.

"Fran!"

And Frances, though she knew what was coming, asked, "What?"

"What if the grocer made a mistake? What if—O Fran—what if there aren't any matches?"

"Have you looked everywhere?"

"No; but what if——"

"Come on, don't be morbid. Time enough to consider that after we've done hunting."

But a silence fell upon Louise, and for the first time she was frightened. She turned to her search, trying to conceal her panic.

"Want to change jobs?" asked Frances.

No, Louise preferred to do the unpacking and to keep on searching.

"I wonder if it can be much colder outside," said Frances later, when for a few moments they left their tasks to take some calisthenic exercises. Their ears and faces and their hands and feet ached with the cold.

They opened the door. The snow, drifted half-way up to the knob, was frozen stiff. Frances got a shovel, planning to make a path, but the wind-packed snow was too hard to make the effort worth while. She stepped up on the snow, rather gingerly at first, expecting it to give way; but it bore her weight. Suddenly she saw a thermometer. It registered twelve degrees below zero. The wind had fallen, and the out-of-doors seemed no colder than the house.

The two girls walked a little way from their house, and looked about them. There was nothing between them and the horizon—nothing; not a tree, not a landmark; only a rolling whiteness, smooth, blank, unfeatured. It lay supine, frozen, helpless, under a gray crouching sky. Only a terrible stillness, a silence that muffled all hope.

Without speaking, they walked back to the house. Frances wished passionately for some way to spare Louise the fear and despair, wished for some word that would not sound like an empty reassurance to a frightened child. What was Louise thinking? What would she say when she knew?

The shack was as cold as outside, only it had a different smell. Not a particularly pleasant smell, yet, suggesting shelter, it was welcome. They closed the door and returned to their tasks.

At last everything had been searched, everything was in order. Except for a comment now and then as to where some object should be placed, there had been little conversation since their walk. At noon they stopped for food. Louise tried a joke.

"Now for the groaning board!" she said, and then suddenly she was weeping. "I'm so cold! so terribly, terribly cold! Except my feet: they're burning hot, and pricking and itching, and I want to scream! Oh, Jim would be so worried if he knew!"

"Scream, dear, scream. Let's have the comfort of screaming, if we wish, and of saying what we are thinking."

"Your feet, too?"

"Not yet."

"How long have you known—have you feared?"

"Since yesterday." And Frances told about the woman who had interrupted her to order the soap.

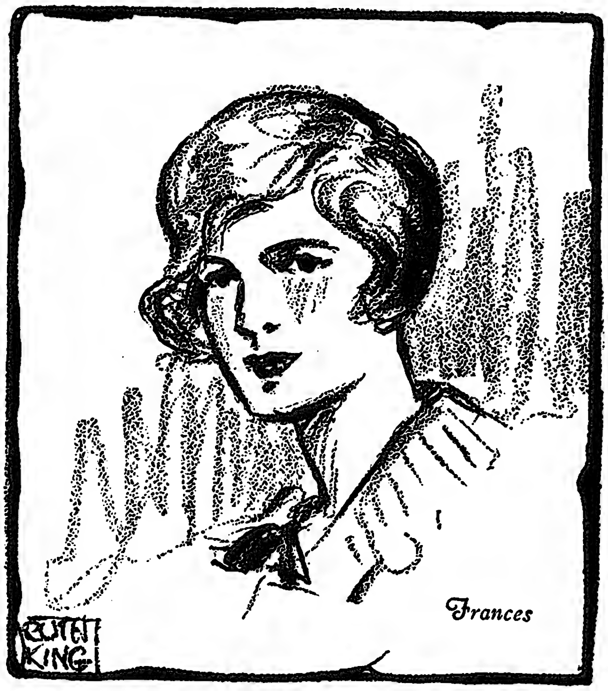
"O Fran, dear Fran! And you didn't tell me. You—you wanted me to have hope, to cling to hope, as long as possible? You're splendid! O Fran!"

There was relief in weeping. Even Frances, the strong, the steady, welcomed the dear relief of tears.

Then they faced the situation. What should be done? What were the chances?

There were two chances. Some one might come. Probably the doctor would come by. His homestead, he had said, was only a few miles away. Possibly he would stop at his homestead on his way back to the city. If so—and possibly if not—he might stop to see them. If not, some one else would surely come in time. It would be a matter of endurance until some one should come.

"We'll be awfully uncomfortable," said Frances. "But as long as we're uncomfortable, we're safe. The danger doesn't really set in until we begin to get numb. Then we have to keep each other awake. We have food enough to keep us alive a long time, even though it is frozen and unpalatable. Later, we'll have to take turns sleeping, and while one of us sleeps, the other will have to rub her arms and legs, to keep them from freezing. This may not be the scientific way, but it may work."



Frances

"And the other chance?" asked Louise.

"Oh, it's the faintest hope. We might try to make a fire from a spark. I have wanted to try all day, but it's so suggestive of despair that I've kept putting it off. We might try striking two pieces of metal together, and make a spark. But it's such a thin little shaving of hope. Now, if we were Indians, or if we had some flint and whatever goes with it, there might be a chance."

Louise grasped eagerly at the straw, and became enthusiastic. Boy Scouts had done it, she had heard. Then surely Frances, the clever, competent Frances, could do it. She helped make the preparations. She tore tissue paper into tiny shreds. She whittled to small bits pieces of dry sage-brush. She and Frances arranged these scraps in the dishpan, and with a somewhat awed feeling, got the poker and a screwdriver.

"We ought to have a chant, a fire-worshipers' chant, to start the thing off," said Louise. She had found laughter again. "If Jim could only see us now!"

BUT SOON the hope petered out. Occasionally a spark flew, and fell into the fuel, but the longed-for combustion did not occur. After an hour they gave it up.

Then Frances said, suddenly, "We must rub your feet with snow or ice. I had forgotten. That's the thing to do for chilblains! We'll chop some of that frozen snow into small bits."

Louise at first protested. Quaking with cold, the thought of cold snow on her feet and legs made her cringe. But anything was better than the fearful burning and itching.

She was surprised, when Frances applied the snow, to find that it felt like warm water on her feet. Blessed discovery! They rubbed their ears, their faces, their fingers, with it. It gave them a measure of easement.

That night they went to bed with all their clothes on, including woolen caps. They decided that it was safe for them both to risk sleeping that night. They ate as much supper as they could force themselves to swallow, trying frozen ham this time. And they went through all the physical exercises they could think of before retiring. Both beds were up now, but they slept together for the added warmth.

From the bed—it was still light—they surveyed the room.

"It *is* attractive!" exclaimed Louise, her eyes running from the cheery curtains, patterned with small yellow flowers and occasional diminutive bluebirds with red tufted heads, to the two comfortable willow chairs, with cushions of the same material. The unpainted deal table, with its brown deskblotter, some writing materials, and a soft, brown-shaded lamp, made a respectable library table.

"Some day," said Frances, "we'll paint that, and the desk chair, and the bookshelves a deep rich creamy colour, to match the chiffonier and mirror. Shall we paint the dining-room table, too?"

The "dining-room table" stood toward the back of the room near the stove, a strip of Russian peasant embroidery and two squat brass candlesticks, with orange candles, "lending it tone between meals," according to Louise. Hanging along the wall near the stove, bright new aluminum pots and pans added cheer to the room. A folding screen concealed the trunks and empty boxes. Two or three braided rugs, which Frances had rescued from her uncle's New England attic, lay on the rough, unfinished floor. Yes, even in the fading light, it was attractive.

But it was cold, aching cold; and notwithstanding their talk of painting furniture, and getting some gaily coloured prints for the walls, their hearts were chilled and preoccupied, Louise's with anxiety for Jim, and Frances'——

"Why," thought Frances, "why is that doctor always in my mind? Anyone could rescue us. Anyone with a match. A slim little piece of wood, tipped at one end with a speck of sulphur, would save our lives. It need not be the doctor." Yet it was of the doctor that she thought most often.

SOMEHOW THE NIGHT was lived through. Frances, having lain awake the previous night, snatched bits of dream-troubled sleep. A fat man in a machine was trying to prevent one of the cowboys from amputating her feet with a screwdriver. "This is no time to be tending to chilblains!" the fat man was crying. "My wife may be dying!" And the cowboy answered—only he had the doctor's voice, "Pull in your teeth, Fatty. Let the lady decide about her own feet." "I'm sorry to detain you," Frances replied, "but he *must* cut off my feet."

"The craziest dream!" she exclaimed to Louise as she awoke, and recounted it. "And the most absurd part was that I actually wanted him to do it, and that the sensation was pleasurable. When he got through he handed the feet to the other cowboy, and told him to put them in the closet next to the dancing-slippers. Then he took my temperature, shouted, 'Up to normal!' and they all rushed out. Then I woke up, and my feet are burning and itching like the deuce!"

Louise found no sleep that night. She stayed awake with her fear, and with a resolve "to live up to Frances" to the end. Would rescue come? Poor Jim! she thought. And more often than she knew, she said it aloud.

The next day they tried an experiment. They walked in opposite directions from the house, as far as they could, having agreed not to go out of sight of the house or of each other. Possibly they could see some other dwelling. "Which way does he live?" thought Frances, gazing around at the unanswering horizon. Nothing came of the undertaking. They returned exhausted, scarcely able to articulate, so stiff were their faces from the wind.

They tried to read, but could not hold a book in their hands. Moreover, their own thoughts seemed more important than anything they could find in books.

They took turns rubbing each other's feet with snow.

"Jim will be so worried!" exclaimed Louise for the hundredth time. "He'll think something terrible has happened."

Frances was silent. To think that Louise did not realize that something terrible *was* happening! Frances almost wished she had a Jim on whom to project her worry!

They stayed in bed most of the next day. The cold seemed to come up from under the bed; so, with great difficulty, because of their stiffness and weakness, they lifted the mattresses to the floor. Yet this gave them no relief.

If only the doctor would come!

Soon they lost track of time. They did not know how many days they had been alone. They only knew that the sun had not shone, that the sky was lowering and gray, that sometimes it snowed, that the thermometer—now their only immediate interest—wavered between twenty and forty below, that the wind raged and fell and raged again.

They began to feel numb. Pain ceased. It was as if drowsiness were breathed down upon them.

"We mustn't let ourselves sleep!" exclaimed Frances. "We must not!"

Then a wonderful thing happened. The long, deep silence was broken. A sound was heard outside.

A sheep, a weak staggering sheep bleated outside their door.

"Poor thing!" they exclaimed. "Poor helpless beastie! Strayed from the fold, literally."

And suddenly they were overwhelmed with tears of pity for the sheep. Once more their tears were like a gift.

They coaxed the sheep inside, and tried to feed it bread, but it was too weak to eat.

"But it's still warm!" exclaimed Louise, as she hugged the animal close. "Come, get near it. Feel here, under the fur, Fran; it's warm!"

Then Frances had an idea. It was a fearsome thought, loathsome, but it might help.

"Could you help me do something terrible, Louise? Could you keep your nerve? It might keep us going a few days longer. Some one is bound to come soon. We—must kill it, and drink its blood."

"O Fran!"

Yet they did it. Louise, her face averted, held the helpless creature as Frances cut its throat. Crying, they drank the blood—all of it.

Then the desire for sleep was on them again, a terrible passion, a fierce hunger, a thing not to be withstood.

"Let's give up, Fran. Let's write our farewells and go to bed."

Scarcely able to hold a pen, Louise wrote a few lines to Jim.

"My dearest, if I could only spare you this anguish! There was an accident: no matches were packed with our things. We are freezing to death. Here is my love, all of it. And my arms about you."

FRANCES FOUND she wanted to write to no one but the doctor. But that was too absurd a whim to be indulged. Instead, she wrote to Jim. Her letter was longer than Louise's. She told him how much Louise's love for him had saved her of anguish. She told, too, in some detail, of their experience: their fight against the weather; how they had killed the sheep and drunk its blood; how they had hoped for rescue. "We thought a certain doctor, who had come out on the stage with us, might stop here on his way back, and we hoped, and then wished passionately for his coming." Frances paused here. Should she allow herself the luxury of that impersonal statement?

She let it stand. She could not have written the letter over again. She could scarcely finish it, as it was, for sleepiness, yet she goaded herself to the end. She left it open on the table, weighting it with a volume of Conrad. "Rather fitting!" she thought. Then she wrote on a large sheet of paper, "We have no matches, and are freezing to death," and nailed this to the outside of the door. She read the thermometer. It registered twenty below.

Every movement required tremendous effort, nightmare effort. Yet, coming back into the room, she looked around, walked back to the "dining-room table," and straightened the strip of Russian embroidery that had fallen awry. "Now I guess we're shipshape."

Then, as she got into bed, she said to Louise,—

"Can you endure to take the cap off your head for a few minutes? If we pull our hair down over our faces it may keep our noses from freezing."

"Kiss me," said Louise sleepily; and Frances held her close. "I love you, Fran, so much—next to Jim."

"I love you, too. Funny how we don't say these things in life. I mean——"

"I know," Louise replied drowsily. And then, "If only Jim were here!"

Then, still in a close embrace, they yielded themselves to sleep.

After ten weatherbound days in the "soddie" of the grief-stricken fat man; after helping to dig through the snow and into the fire-thawed earth to make a grave for the fat man's wife and baby; after helping him put a rude fence about the lonely grave—to keep the cattle from tramping over it—the doctor started out on horseback for the town ironically named Sweetweather, the stage terminus. If the stage would risk the deep snow, now beginning to soften under the shy advances of the long-truant sun, he would stop to see how "those girls" had weathered the blizzard and the bitter weather. They had been on his mind. Nothing could have happened to them, really. They were a healthy, capable sort—especially Miss Stead—and much better equipped for cold weather, doubtless, than many homesteaders. However, they were new to the country. Had they brought all that they needed?

At Sweetweather, where he spent the night, Little Willie was emphatic: the stage would not start till after the weather had "set." He tried to dissuade the doctor from going on ahead on horseback. "Them girls is all right. And you don't need to go to your outfit. You weren't counting on getting to it for another week, anyhow. You can't trust this sun."

Yet the doctor ventured on. The stage was to stop at "the girls," when it did go back to the city. The doctor would leave word with "the girls" as to where he would wait for it.

The trip was far more laborious than he had expected. The horse plodded painfully through the snow. In one place a queer series of lumpy mounds attracted the doctor's attention. The horse shied. The doctor dismounted and scraped into the snow with his spur, which finally struck something hard. Further investigation proved it to be a sheep, frozen to death. A whole flock, it seemed, pressed close together, had frozen there.

"The spring should be coming, and there seems to be nothing but death in the land," he said, and shook himself, as if to throw off the thought of death. "I suppose I ought to be feeling gay, or pleased, or something, to be making a call; but there's only apprehension in my heart, and a great weariness."

The light was falling, when of a sudden he spied the little black shack. He whistled: he had expected to see the smoke first, for the wind was coming from the direction of the house. And here was the shack, and no smoke. What could have happened? He spurred his horse. Soon he could see the white paper on the door. Perhaps they had gone somewhere else, and the paper was merely a notice. Yet his heart sank.

THERE WAS HOPE, just a ghost of hope. Their hearts were still beating. He lighted a lamp, and placed it as far from the bed as possible. "Lucky a doctor found them," he said between his teeth, as he set to work. "Some fool might have lighted a fire at once."

With great difficulty he disentwined the two bodies and removed the clothing, being careful to avoid a sudden jerky movement. So frozen were their fingers and toes, that an awkward manipulation might easily break them off. He poured brandy down their throats. Then he brought in snow, and packed it about their arms and legs, and moving their hair, which had caked with ice from their frozen breath, he packed the soft snow on their faces. The rest of their bodies had escaped frost-bite.

But their limbs looked dead. Perhaps they could not be saved. Still, he remembered an account, in a medical journal, of a man who had been exposed four days, one of whose limbs had been apparently dead, but who, after seventy hours of careful treatment, had been able to walk about with nothing worse than a frost-bite on his heel. He remembered vividly the description of the treatment. The frozen leg had been bathed in ice-cold water for two hours, and then enveloped in furs. Then there had been friction with the feathery side of a birdskin; then with snow. The treatment had been continuous for twenty-four hours. The temperature of the room had been gradually raised, with lamps.

He looked about the room for some substitute for the birdskin, and for the first time saw the open letters on the table. The sheep incident fed his hopes: they had had something with real food-value. "They're a plucky lot, and they certainly used their heads!" he said aloud. He could use the sheep's skin. But before he turned to look for the sheep, his eye took in the next sentence of the letter: "We thought a certain doctor, who had come out on the stage with us, might stop here on his way back, and we hoped and then wished passionately for his coming." Perhaps, then, she had been drawn to him as he had to her? But, no, that was sheer fatuousness. Of course a doctor would be the person hoped for. Nevertheless, all the depression which had weighed him down since morning seemed to fall from him. He forgot, too, his weariness. He knew only that there was a hard fight ahead, and that against a million odds, with all his heart and all his science, he would fight it.

He must do more than save the lives of the two girls. He must save for them their arms and legs and ears and noses; he must fight against the coming of Arctic fever, pneumonia, gangrene, erysipelas, and against other fearful possibilities.

He worked all night, watching anxiously for signs of returning consciousness. Toward morning Louise's eyelids flickered. Then there really was hope! He had said it over and over to himself, but only now did he really believe it. His spirit was upborne. Now if only Frances would give some sign.

Hours passed, yet Frances gave no sign. He worked on, ceaselessly. Louise woke and slept and woke and slept. Once she spoke—"Frances?"

"She'll come round all right," he answered; and he willed it with all his might. His will was a flame, searing him, goading him on. It was a thing more than mere will. It was—could it be—love?

At night the miracle happened. Frances' eyes, half-open, heavy, uncomprehending, were idly upon him. He stopped, and caught his breath. The eyes opened wider, and—as if her mind as well as her vision were gathered into focus—they felt out toward him with questioning and with understanding.

An ecstasy of thanksgiving gushed up in his heart, flooding him. The joy was almost pain. He turned his head away. Then he pulled himself together, and went on with his work.

THREE SUNNY, THAWING DAYS passed before the sound of the chugging stage fell upon their welcoming ears. The doctor was still at work, never having stopped to sleep. It had been a long but a victorious fight. Complete recovery, though not yet achieved, was assured.

He had never once been conscious of exhaustion; but when Little Willie came into the room, an ally from the outside world, Dr. Calhoun said only, "Get some woman," sank into a chair, and was at once asleep.

Frances and Louise explained—they had long since regained speech,—and Little Willie started off at once for a neighbour.

"I'm glad he doesn't snore," said Frances, absently. "Does Jim?"

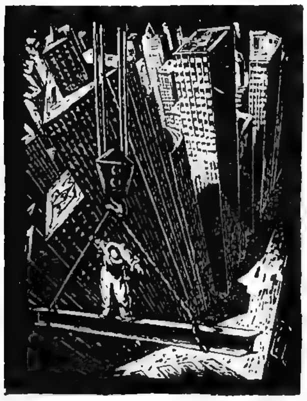
"Why, what a question!" She stopped a gasping moment; then, "O Fran!"

"What utter nonsense! What do you mean? How absurd! Why, I hardly know the man! Besides——" She broke off. Then, with apparent irrelevance, "O Louise, I do wish you had your Jim here."

Louise paused a moment. Then she retorted, "It is customary, I believe, to wait till after marriage, and it is only decent to wait till after engagement, before patronizing and pitying one's old-maid friends!"

Her eyes and her voice and her laugh were sunny with understanding. Here was a tale, oh, what a tale, to write to Jim!

Glory *to* Them



Woodcut by Gan Kolski

GLORY TO THEM, the toilers of the earth,
Who wrought with knotted hands, in wood and stone,
Dreams their unlettered minds could not give birth
And symmetries their souls had never known.
Glory to them, the artisans, who spread
Cathedrals like brown lace before the sun,
Who could not build a rhyme, but reared instead
The Doric grandeur of the Parthenon!

I never cross a marble portico,
Or lift my eyes where stained glass windows steal
From virgin sunlight moods of deeper glow,
Or walk dream-peopled streets, except to feel
A hush of reverence for that vast dead
Who gave us beauty for a crust of bread.

ANDERSON M. SCRUGGS.

So They Say

Aristide Briand:
Premier of France and peacemaker, but exponent of security for his country

"The tendency is to be broadminded about other people's security."

Dr. H. Jaworski:
scientist

"A day in 1929 is perhaps equivalent to ten of the thirteenth century."

Joe Smith:
detective for the old Waldorf Astoria Hotel for thirty years

"Women detectives are apt to take a dislike to a man because of the colour of his tie, or the way he walks, or the cut of his clothes. . . . They call this intuition, and pursue him while the guilty man escapes."

Dr. Frank Parker Day:
president of Union College, Schenectady, at the annual luncheon to Poultney Bigelow, noted historian

"When we examine the literature of the past, we find that men invariably idealized some age behind them. Rarely does a poet speak with full approval of his own age."

Dr. E. E. Free:
of New York University, blames eye-strain for the tiredness of the Tired Business Man

"The glass-topped desk is responsible for many losses in business."

Professor Gilbert Murray:
of Oxford University, will probably affect steamship bookings by his pronouncement that—

"Foreign travel sometimes makes you dislike actively some nation toward which you were quite indifferent before."

André Maurois:
French writer—himself undoubtedly a "vertical"

"The horizontal author simply runs along; the vertical writer stops to dig, and sometimes causes a spring to gush forth."

Rudyard Kipling:
author of "Kim," addresses a boys' school at Sturry, Kent, England

"You may have noticed there is not much justice in your present world. There is rather less outside. This will save you all the time and trouble of looking for it. Most injustice is not inflicted deliberately, but because people do not take the trouble to think things out."

Theodore Pratt:
newspaper writer, gets a look-in on Will Hays' report to his company on what not to show in films

"Canada will not permit a vacuum cleaner to take off a lady's dress in a movie, Nova Scotia will not let the lady herself do this. . . . Virginia does not like too much of Lupe Velez's chest. . . . Ohio will not permit any lady to take a bath . . . and the word 'bum' isn't allowed on English screens anywhere . . ."

Dr. Charles F. Pabst:
chief dermatologist at Greenpoint Hospital, Brooklyn, N. Y.

"The average normal adult has sixteen square feet of skin, which would form a mat two feet wide and eight feet long, and the average American woman treats it like a door-mat."

Dr. Edward Everett Hicks:
psychiatrist, thinks it unwise to submit the criminal to his profession for judgment

"We psychiatrists are too theoretical. Judges are better qualified to say what should be done. Psychiatrists will always find something wrong with the person who has done wrong."

"American Lumberman":

"President and Mrs. Hoover go auto riding Sunday afternoons. By this simple method they are able every week to see most of the American people."

Miss Marjorie Oelrichs:
New York society girl, in "Liberty"

" 'Are you happy?' I have asked ever so many well-born and rich girls I know. And their answer has been invariably 'No.' "

Dr. Robert A. Millikan:
scientist and Nobel Prize winner

"I believe that one of the greatest contributions the United States ever can, or ever will, make to world progress . . . will consist in furnishing an example to the world of how the religious life of a nation can evolve intelligently, inspiringly, reverently, completely divorced from all unreason, all superstition, and all unwholesome emotionalism."

GEORGES CLÉMENCEAU:
"The Tiger" of France

"At 88, I am in the danger zone. I do not ask for death, neither do I fear it . . . I await it."

VIVIAN FORBES:
English artist, has a unique reaction to the skyscrapers of New York

"When Gothic architecture was developing, there developed simultaneously the conical type of headdress and pointed shoes. To me there is a similar relationship between the tall, slender skyscraper and the jersey and 'plus fours,' fitting the torso tightly and emphasizing its slenderness."

MORRIS HILLQUIT:
national chairman of the Socialist Party

"A Socialist régime in a peasant country is unthinkable. A Russian Government without peasant support is impossible. . . . The Russian experiment is a complete vindication of the Marxian philosophy, negatively . . ."

RICHARD HUGHES:
young English author, came over here to rest, and . . .

"I also came over to learn the American language. It can't be done. . . . I've heard whole sentences of which not one word got across to me."

FRANCES R. DONOVAN:
of Chicago, who has been studying feminine psychology in the department stores

"The 'price-no-object' shopper is a nuisance, because most of the time she hasn't the price to buy anything."

W. AND L. TOWNSEND:
British journalists, explain the Prince of Wales

"The Prince is a firm disciple of the belief that there's no use in marrying without love. Because he has not yet experienced that emotion in its true intensity, the Prince does not get married. That is all there is to it."

PROFESSOR WILLIAM LYON PHELPS:
of Yale University

"Nature makes boys and girls lovely to look upon so they can be tolerated until they acquire some sense."

PROF. C. JUDSON HERRICK:
of the University of Chicago

"Hard thinking is real work. It takes bodily energy, and it leaves the body tired. A thought is a manufactured product as truly as a pair of shoes or a magnetic field. The general conclusion from a study of natural and artificial mechanisms is that these are all contrivances to do some kind of work and deliver some kind of a product. They are active, not passive. Man is simply a machine that thinks."

REV. DR. CHARLES FRANCIS POTTER:
finds a new religion, which he names Humanism

"Prayers will not be used. . . . Prayers are in essence the begging of favours . . . from a monarchic deity. The classical prayer consists of the ascription of praise to put God in a good humour; then of thanksgiving to show that you appreciate favours, and then of petition."

SHERWOOD ANDERSON:
author, and editor of two newspapers in Marion, Virginia, tells what his readers there think of him

"You have no idea how patient they are with me. They regard me as a nut, but I think they like me."

HAMILTON HOLT:
now president of Rollins College, Winter Park, Fla.

"When I left college and entered my professional career as a magazine editor, I was profoundly impressed to find that my colleagues in the editorial room, who never thought of teaching me anything, taught me everything; while my professors at the university, who were paid to teach me, had taught me almost nothing."

B. P. FINEMAN:
motion picture producer, says the world continues to demand beauty in screen actresses

"The public has never accepted interesting-looking girls, no matter how competent, as heroines."

COLONEL LLOYD C. GRISCOM:
former U. S. Ambassador to Italy, visits Moscow's underground restaurant, Arbat

"Two workers came over and looked at my hands. When they found they were clean and not calloused . . . they publicly announced the fact that I was not a worker, and therefore absolutely no good."

EDWARD HOPE:
columnist, in the New York "Herald Tribune"

"The kiss in the American motion picture has come to be recognized as the symbol for The End. . . . All we care to say certainly is that the events that result from a kiss are likely to be far more interesting than those that lead up to it."

PRESIDENT ANGELL:
of Yale University

"The boy who is determined to go to the devil will in all probability accomplish his purpose and reach his destination whether he is in college or out."

Translated by
Anders Orbeck

Elias and the Draug

By JONAS LIE

ON KVALHOLMEN down in Helgeland there once lived a poor fisherman, by name Elias, and his wife, Karen, who before her marriage had worked in the parsonage at Alstadhaug.* They lived in a little hut which they had built, and Elias hired out by the day in the Lofoten fisheries.

Kvalholmen was a lonely island, and there were signs at times that it was haunted. Sometimes when her husband was away from home, the good wife heard all sorts of unearthly noises and cries, which surely boded no good.

Each year there came a child; when they had been married seven years there were six children in the home. But they were both steady and hard-working people, and by the time the last arrived, Elias had managed to put aside something, and felt that he could afford a sixern, and thereafter do his Lofoten fishing as master in his own boat.

One day, as he was walking with a halibut harpoon in one hand, thinking about this, he suddenly came upon a huge seal, sunning itself in the lee of a rock near the shore, and apparently quite as much taken by surprise as he was.

Elias meanwhile was not slow. From the rocky ledge on which he was standing, he plunged the long, heavy harpoon into its back just behind the neck. But then—oh, what a struggle! Instantly the seal reared itself up, stood erect on its tail, tall as the mast of a boat, and glowered at him with a pair of bloodshot eyes, at the same time showing its teeth in a grin so fiendish and venomous that Elias almost lost his wits from fright. Then suddenly it plunged into the sea and vanished in a spray of mingled blood and water.

That was the last Elias saw of it; but that very afternoon the harpoon, broken just below the iron barb, came drifting ashore near the boat landing not far from his house.

Jonas Lie

Elias had soon forgotten all about it. He bought his sixern that same autumn, and housed it in a little boatshed he had built during the summer.

One night, as he lay thinking about his new sixern, it occurred to him that perhaps, in order to safeguard it properly, he ought to put another shore underneath it on either side. He was so absurdly fond of the boat that he thought it only fun to get up and light his lantern and go down to look it over.

As he held up his lantern to see better, he suddenly glimpsed, on a tangle of nets in one corner, a face that resembled exactly the features of the seal. It grimaced for a moment angrily toward him and the light. Its mouth seemed to open wider and wider, and before he was aware of anything further, he saw a bulky man-form vanish out the door of the boat-house, not so fast, however, but that he managed to make out, with the aid of his lantern, a long iron prong projecting from its back.

Elias now began to put two and two together. But even so he was more concerned for the safety of his boat than he was for his own life.

On the morning, early in January, when he set out for the fishing banks, with two men in the boat beside himself, he heard a voice call to him in the darkness from a skerry directly opposite the mouth of the cove. He thought that it laughed derisively.

"Better beware, Elias, when you get your femböring!"*

It was a long time, however, before Elias saw his way clear to get a femböring—not until his eldest son was seventeen years old.

It was in the fall of the year that Elias embarked with his whole family and went to Ranen to trade in his sixern for a femböring. At home they left only a little Lap girl, but newly confirmed, whom they had taken into their home some years before. There was one femböring in particular which he had his eye on, a little four-man boat, which the best shipwright thereabout had finished and tarred that very fall. For this boat he traded in his own sixern, paying the difference in coin.

Elias thereupon began to think of sailing home. He first stopped at the village store and laid in supplies for Christmas for himself and his family, among other things a little keg of brandy. It may be that, pleased as they were with the day's bargaining, both he and

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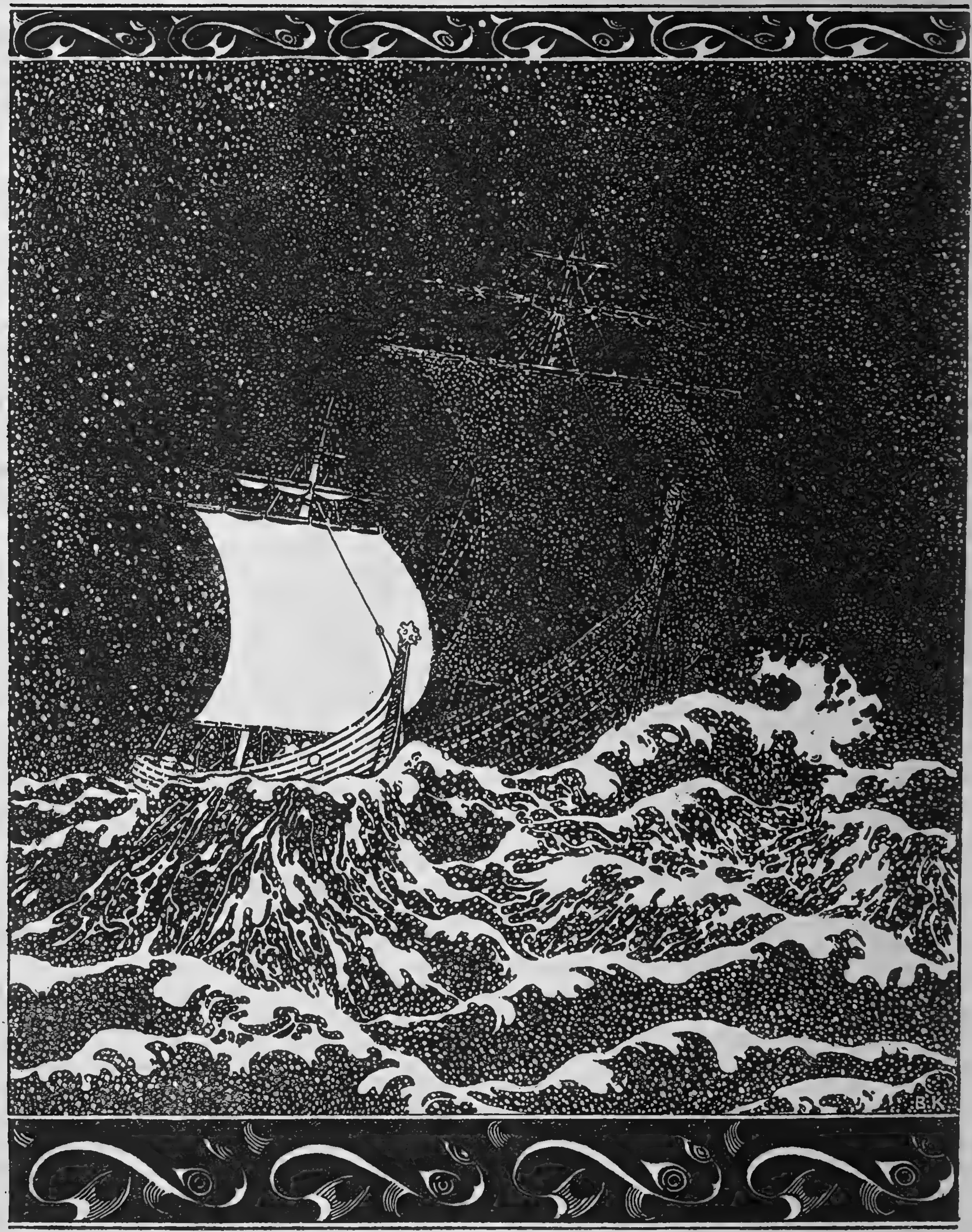
*"The Parson at Alstadhaug" was Peder Dass, author of "Norlands Trompet" ("The Trumpet of the North"), a long poem descriptive of northern Norway. He died in 1707.

*"Femböring," a famous type of Scandinavian fishing-boat, the lines of which have been perfected by centuries of experimenting.



"He was fated no doubt this night to sail the sea for the last time. . . . The cursed boat ran ever alongside him as if to mock him. . . ."

Drawings by
Ben Kutcher

his wife had one drop too many before they left, and Bernt, their son, was given a taste too.

Whereupon they set sail for home in the new femböring. Other ballast than himself, his wife and children, and his Christmas supplies he had none. His son Bernt sat in the stem; his wife, with the assistance of the second son, managed the halyard; Elias himself sat at the tiller, while the two younger sons, twelve and fourteen respectively, were to alternate at the bailing.

They had fifty-odd miles of sea before them, and they had no sooner reached the open than it was apparent that the femböring would be put to the test the very first time it was in use. A storm blew up before long, and soon white-crested waves began dashing themselves into spray. Then Elias saw what kind of a boat he had. It rode the waves like a sea gull, without so much as taking in one single drop, and he was ready to swear that he would not even have to single-reef, as any ordinary femböring would have been compelled to do in such weather.

As the day drew on, he noticed not far away another femböring, completely manned, speeding along, just as he was then, with four reefs in the sail. It seemed to follow the same course, and he thought it strange that he had not noticed it before. It seemed to want to race with him, and when Elias realized this, he could not resist letting out a reef again.

So they raced along at a terrific speed past headlands and islands and skerries. To Elias it seemed that he had never before sailed so gloriously, and the femböring proved to be every whit that had been claimed—the best boat in Ranen.

Meanwhile the sea had risen, and already several huge waves had rolled over them, breaking against the stem up forward, where Bernt sat, and sweeping out to leeward near the stern.

Ever since dusk had settled over the sea, the other boat had kept very close to them, and they were now so near each other that they could have thrown a bailing-dipper, one to the other, had they wished. And so they sailed on, side by side, all the evening, in an ever-increasing sea.

That last reef, Elias began to think, ought really to be taken in again, but he was loath to give up the race, and made up his mind to wait as long as possible, until the other boat saw fit to reef in, for it was quite as hard pressed as he. And since they now had to fight both the cold and the wet, the brandy bottle was now and then brought forth and passed around.

THE PHOSPHORESCENT LIGHT, which played on the dark sea near his own boat, flashed eerily in the white crests around the stranger, which appeared to be plowing a furrow of light and throwing a fiery foam to either side. In the reflection of this light he could even distinguish the rope ends in the other boat. He could also make out the crew on board in their oilskin caps, but inasmuch as they were on the leeward side of him, they kept their backs turned and were almost hidden behind the lofty gunwale, as it rose with the seas.

Of a sudden a gigantic breaker whose white crest Elias had for some time seen in the darkness, crashed against the prow of the boat, where Bernt sat. For a moment the whole femböring seemed to come to a stop, the timbers creaked and jarred under the strain, and then the boat, which for half a second had balanced uncertainly, righted itself and sped forward, while the wave rolled out again to leeward.

All the while this was happening Elias thought he heard fiendish cries issuing from the other boat.

But when it was over, his wife, who sat at the halyard, cried out in a voice that cut him to the very soul, "My God, Elias, that sea took Marthe and Nils!"

These were their two youngest children, the former nine, and the latter seven years old, who had been sitting forward close to Bernt.

"Hold fast to the halyard, Karen, or you may lose more!" was all that Elias answered.

IT WAS NECESSARY NOW to take in the fourth reef, and Elias had no sooner done so than he thought it advisable to reef in the fifth, for the sea was steadily rising. On the other hand, if he hoped to sail his boat clear of the ever mounting waves, he dared not lessen his sail more than was absolutely necessary.

It turned out, however, to be difficult going even with the sail thus diminished. The sea raged furiously, and deluged them with cataracts of spray. Finally, Bernt and Anton, the next oldest, who had helped his mother at the halyard, had to take hold of the yardarm, something one resorts to only when a boat is hard pressed even with the last reef in—in this case the fifth.

The rival boat, which in the meantime had disappeared from sight, bobbed up alongside them again with exactly the same amount of sail that Elias was carrying.

Elias now began rather to dislike the crew over there. The two men who stood holding the yardarm, and whose faces he could glimpse underneath their oilskin caps, appeared to him in the weird reflections from the spray more like specters than human beings. They spoke ne'er a word.

A little to leeward he spied the foaming ridge of another breaker rising before him in the dark, and he prepared himself to meet it. He turned the prow slantwise towards it, and let out as much sail as he dared, to give the boat speed enough to cleave its way through.

The sea struck them with the roar of a torrent. For a moment the boat again careened uncertainly. When it was all over, and the vessel had righted itself once more, his wife no longer sat at the halyard, nor was Anton at the yardarm—they had both been washed overboard.

This time, too, he thought he made out the same fiendish voices above the storm, but mingled with them he also heard his wife's agonizing cries as she called him by name. When he realized that she had been swept overboard, he muttered to himself, "In Jesus' name!" and said no more.

He felt vaguely that he would have preferred to follow her, but he realized at the same time that it was up to him to save the other three he had on board, Bernt and the two younger sons, the one twelve, the other fourteen, who for a while had been doing the bailing, but whom he had later placed in the stern.

Bernt was now left to manage the yardarm alone, and the two, father and son, had to help each other as best they could. The tiller Elias did not dare let go; he held onto it with a hand of iron, long since numb from the strain.

After a while the companion boat bobbed up again; as before it had been momentarily lost to view. He now saw more clearly than before the bulky form that sat aft, much as he was sitting, and controlled the tiller. Projecting from his neck whenever he turned his back, just below the oilskin cap, Elias could clearly discern some four inches or so of an iron prong.

AND THEN HE WAS convinced in his innermost soul of two things: One was that it was none other than the Draug* himself who sat steering his half-boat alongside his and who had lured him on to destruction, and the other was that he was no doubt fated this night to sail the sea for the last time. For he who sees the Draug at sea is a marked man. He said nothing to the others, in order not to discourage them, but he commended his soul in silence to the Lord.

He had found it necessary, during the last hours, to bear away from his course because of the storm, and when, in addition, it took to snowing heavily, he realized that he would no doubt have to postpone any attempt to land until dawn.

Meanwhile they sailed on as before.

Now and again the boys aft complained of freezing, but there was nothing to do about that, wet as they were. Furthermore, Elias sat preoccupied with his own thoughts.

He had been seized with an insatiable desire to avenge himself. What he would have liked most to do, had he not had the lives of his three remaining children to safeguard, was suddenly to veer about in an attempt to ram and sink the cursed boat, which still as if to mock him ran ever alongside him, and whose fiendish purpose he now fully comprehended. If the halibut harpoon had once taken effect, why might not now a knife or a gaff do likewise? He felt he would willingly give his life to deal one good blow to this monster, who had so unmercifully robbed him of all that was dearest to him on earth, and who still seemed insatiate and demanded more.

About three or four o'clock in the morning they again spied rolling toward them in the darkness the white crest of a wave, so huge that Elias for a moment surely thought they were just off shore somewhere, in the neighbourhood of breakers. It was not long, however, before he understood that it really was only a colossal wave.

Then he thought he clearly heard some one laugh and cry out in the other boat.

"There goes your femböring, Elias!"

Elias, who foresaw the catastrophe, repeated loudly, "In Jesus' name!" commanded his sons to hold fast, and told them if the boat went down to grasp the osier bands in the oarlocks, and not to let go till it had come afloat again. He let the elder of the two boys go forward to Bernt; the younger he kept close to himself, caressing his cheeks furtively once or twice, and assuring himself that the child had a tight hold.

The boat was literally buried beneath the towering comber, and was then pitched up on end, its stem high above the wave, before it finally went under. When it came afloat again, its keel now in the air, Elias, Bernt, and the twelve-year-old Martin appeared too, still clinging to the osier bands. But the third of the brothers had disappeared.

It was a matter of life and death now, first of all to get the rigging cut away on one side, that they might be rid of the mast, which would otherwise rock the boat from beneath, and then to crawl up onto the hull and let the imprisoned air out, which would otherwise have kept the boat too high afloat and prevented it riding the waves safely. After considerable difficulty they succeeded in doing so, and Elias, who had been the first to clamber up, assisted the other two to safety.

Thus they sat the long winter night through, desperately clinging with cramped hands and numb knees to the hull, as one wave after another swept over them.

After a few hours, Martin, whom the father had supported all this time as best he could, died of exhaustion and slipped into the sea.

They had several times attempted to call for help, but realizing that it was of no avail, they finally gave it up.

As the two, thus left alone, sat on the hull of the boat, Elias told Bernt he knew that he himself was fated soon to "follow mother," but he had a firm hope that Bernt would be saved in the end, if only he stuck it out like a man. And then he told him all about the Draug—how he had wounded him in the neck with the halibut harpoon, and how the Draug was now taking his revenge and would surely not give in until they were quits.

IT WAS TOWARD nine o'clock in the morning before the day finally began to dawn. Elias then handed to Bernt, who sat at his side, his silver watch with the brass chain, which he had broken in pulling it out from underneath his close-buttoned vests.

He still sat on a while longer, but as it grew lighter Bernt saw that his father's face was ghastly pale. The hair on his head had parted in several places, as it often does just before death, and the skin on his hands was worn off from his efforts to hang on to the keel. Bert realized that his father was near the end. He tried, as well as the pitching of the boat permitted, to edge over to him and support him. But when Elias noticed it, he waved him back.

"You stay where you are, Bernt, and hold fast! I'm going to mother! In Jesus' name!"

And so saying he threw himself backward down from the hull.

When the sea had got its own, it quieted down for a while, as everyone knows who has straddled a hull. It became easier for Bernt to maintain his hold, and with the coming of daylight new hope kindled in him. The storm moderated, and in the full light of day he thought he recognized his surroundings—that he was, in fact, drifting directly off shore from his own home, Kvalholmen.

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*The Draug is a sea monster who sails a half-boat with a crew of men, lost at sea, who have not received Christian burial. He who sees the Draug, according to Northern superstition, will soon die.

He began crying for help again, but he really had greater faith in a tide he knew bore landward, just beyond a projection of the island, which checked the fury of the sea.

He drifted nearer and nearer shore, and finally came so close to one of the skerries that the mast, which still floated alongside the boat, grated on the rocks with the rising and falling of the surf. Stiff as his muscles and joints were from his sitting so long and holding fast to the hull, he managed with a great effort to transfer himself to the skerry, after which he hauled in the mast and finally moored the femböring.

The little Lap girl, who was home alone, thought she had heard cries for help for two hours, and when they persisted she mounted the hilltop to look out to sea. There she saw Bernt on the skerry, and the upturned femböring beating up and down against it. She ran instantly down to the boat-house, pushed out the old rowboat, and rowed it out to the skerry, hugging the shore round the island.

Bernt lay ill, under her care, the whole winter long, and did not take part in the fishing that year. People used to say that ever after he seemed now and again a little queer. To sea he would never go again; he had come to fear it.

He married the Lap girl, and moved up to Malingen, where he broke new ground and cleared himself a home. There he is still living and doing well.

Traffic in 1835

Clarence Lynch

Coaches are said to have been invented in Hungary, and called *kotzey,* in French *coche,* and were introduced into England in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. They were then termed *whirlicotes,* a name long since sunk into oblivion. The first was brought from Holland in 1564, by William Boonen, a Dutchman, Elizabeth's coachman; and according to a contemporary, "the sight of it put both horse and man into amazement: some said it was a great crabshell brought out of China; and some imagined it to be one of the pagan temples in which the cannibals adore the devil." It most probably therefore resembled the state-carriage of present times. They were, however, soon generally adopted. And Elizabeth, who in the beginning of her reign rode to the House of Peers on a pillion, toward the end of it is represented as taking an airing every day in her coach.

About 1634 a retired naval officer of the name of Bailey purchased four carriages, and dressing their drivers in liveries, employed them to carry passengers for hire about the metropolis. The scheme met with public encouragement; and in the succeeding year the example was followed, and twenty of these coaches plied at the Maypole (then placed in the Strand, on the east of Somerset House), and about the Inns of Court; but a proclamation was almost immediately issued, prohibiting their use in the streets, "because the common passages were obstructed by them." This might possibly have discouraged their employment, for in 1637 they had increased to only fifty. At the commencement of the present century there were 1100; a number which has been since nearly doubled. Hackney was the first place where coaches were let on hire, either by the day, or for a passage to London; and although in 1625 there were only twenty such vehicles, in 1734 they had throughout the kingdom accumulated to 900; all of which were still denominated hackney coaches. The horses that drew them, as well as all other hired horses from the same origin, were termed *hackneys,* or by abbreviation, *hacks,* a word subsequently extended to paid occasional services generally. As the number of coaches that plied the streets increased, those that passed to and from Hackney and other places near town, were by way of distinction called *stages.* The appellation is adopted throughout the country, and applied to all similar conveyances, whether they run longer or shorter distances; but a stage still marks the distance that can be performed without change of horses. The larger carriages, now so common in London and its vicinity, were introduced recently; and received the name *omnibus,* from their design of accommodating all. They prove not a little annoying, by producing the evil that first called forth the proclamation against hackney coaches; which lately led to a remark in the House of Commons that "the best plan of getting out of their way was to get into them"; and it is not improbable that they may be soon placed under some legislative restrictions.

The unwieldy machines used for public conveyance in England, within a period to which memory can recur, need not be described. Then a journey from the remote parts of the country to London was regarded as a more serious undertaking than is a voyage now across the Atlantic. With all the appliances of royalty, a Princess not very long deceased has recorded in her journal a whole dolorous day spent in traveling up to town from Windsor; a distance now regularly passed in less than three hours.

The Youth's Instructer and Guardian (1835).

Comments by
OTIS SKINNER

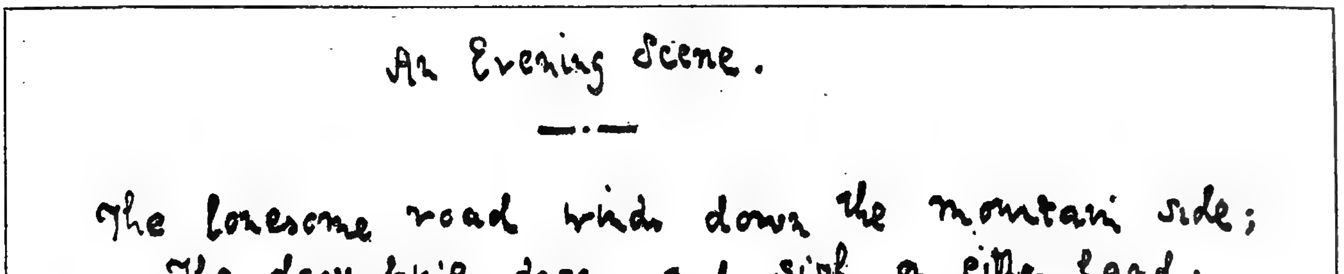
Woodcut by
Richard Bennett

Part IV:
Conclusion

Leaves from the Autograph Album of Mrs. Edwin Booth

In looking over the autograph letters in the Golden Book selection one notes the number of poets in Mr. Booth's circle of acquaintances. Among them is his biographer, William Winter, whose trenchant dramatic criticisms in the New York *Tribune* are still remembered. It was Edwin Booth's idea that Winter should be made librarian of the Players' Club. This wish, however, was opposed by a tacit understanding that dramatic critics should not become members.

William Dean Howells' verse recalls an episode



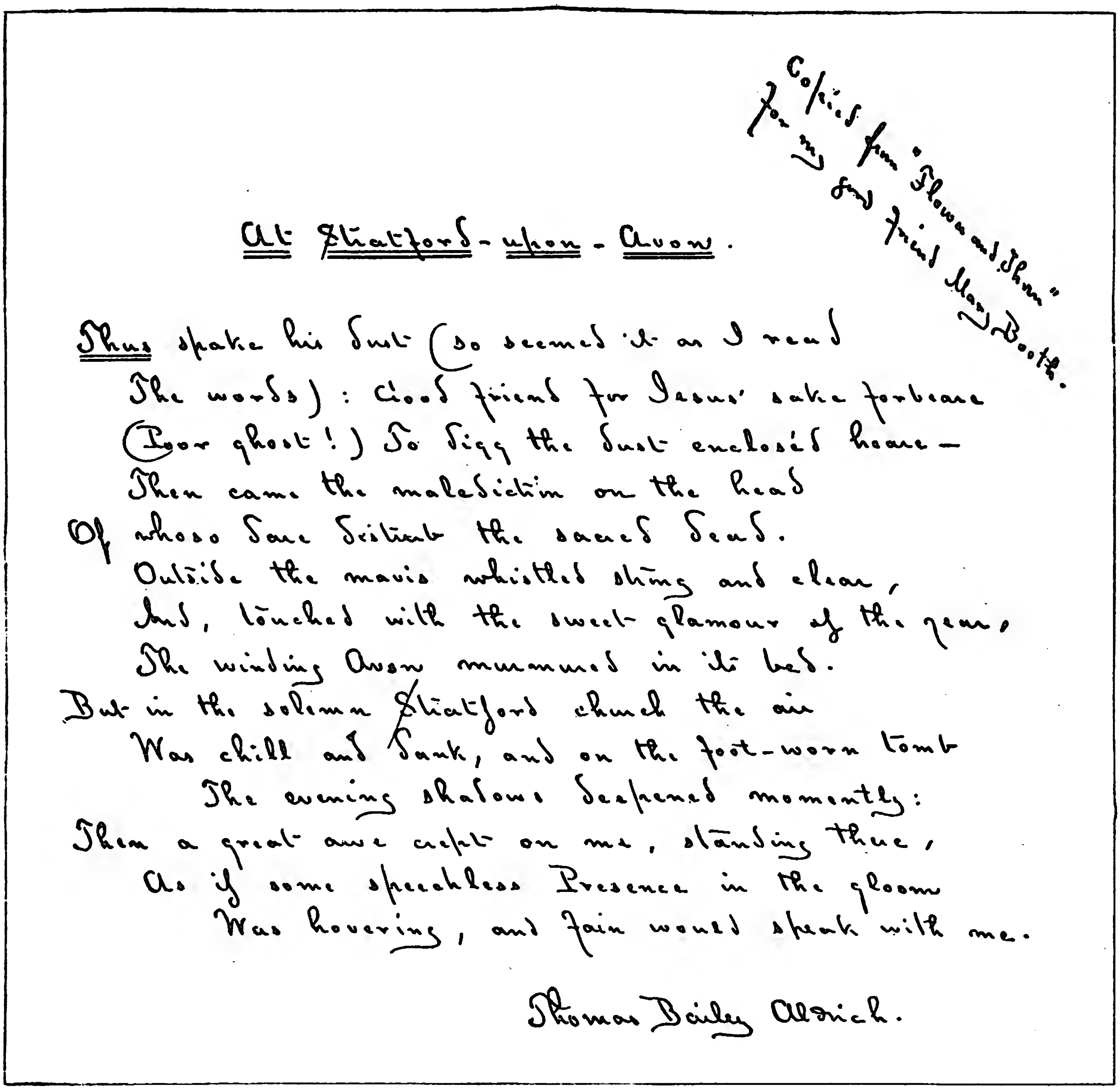
An Evening Scene.

—•—

The lonesome road winds down the mountain side;
The dark pines dream, and sigh, on either hand;
Through the dim plain below thin streamlets glide,
And twinkling cots in peaceful hamlets stand.
The smile of sunset warms this lovely land;
The fragrant breeze of evening whispers low;
And, over all, in lurid masses grand,
The crimson sunset banners stream and glow,—
As if in some vast rout and monarch's overthrow.

William Winter.

New Brighton. S.I.
April 20th. 1880.



Copied from "Flowers and Thorns"
for my dear friend Mary Booth.

At Stratford-upon-Avon.

Thus spake his dust (so seemed it as I read
The words): Good friend for Jesus' sake forbeare
(Poor ghost!) To digg the dust enclosèd heare —
Then came the malediction on the head
Of whoso dare disturb the sacred dead.
Outside the mavis whistled strong and clear,
And, touched with the sweet glamour of the year,
The winding Avon murmured in its bed.
But in the solemn Stratford church the air
Was chill and dank, and on the foot-worn tomb
The evening shadows deepened momently:
Then a great awe crept on me, standing there,
As if some speechless Presence in the gloom
Was hovering, and fain would speak with me.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich.

which he records in *Literary Friends and Acquaintances*. Booth was one of a party at the house of a New York friend. During the evening he saw the cast of a huge hand which he took from its shelf and examined with great curiosity. "Whose hand is this?" he asked. His host was greatly perturbed, but when the question was repeated he had no choice but to answer: "It is Lincoln's hand."

"And," says Howells, "the man for whom it meant such unspeakable things put it softly down without a word." At that moment he must have heard the voice of his assassin brother.

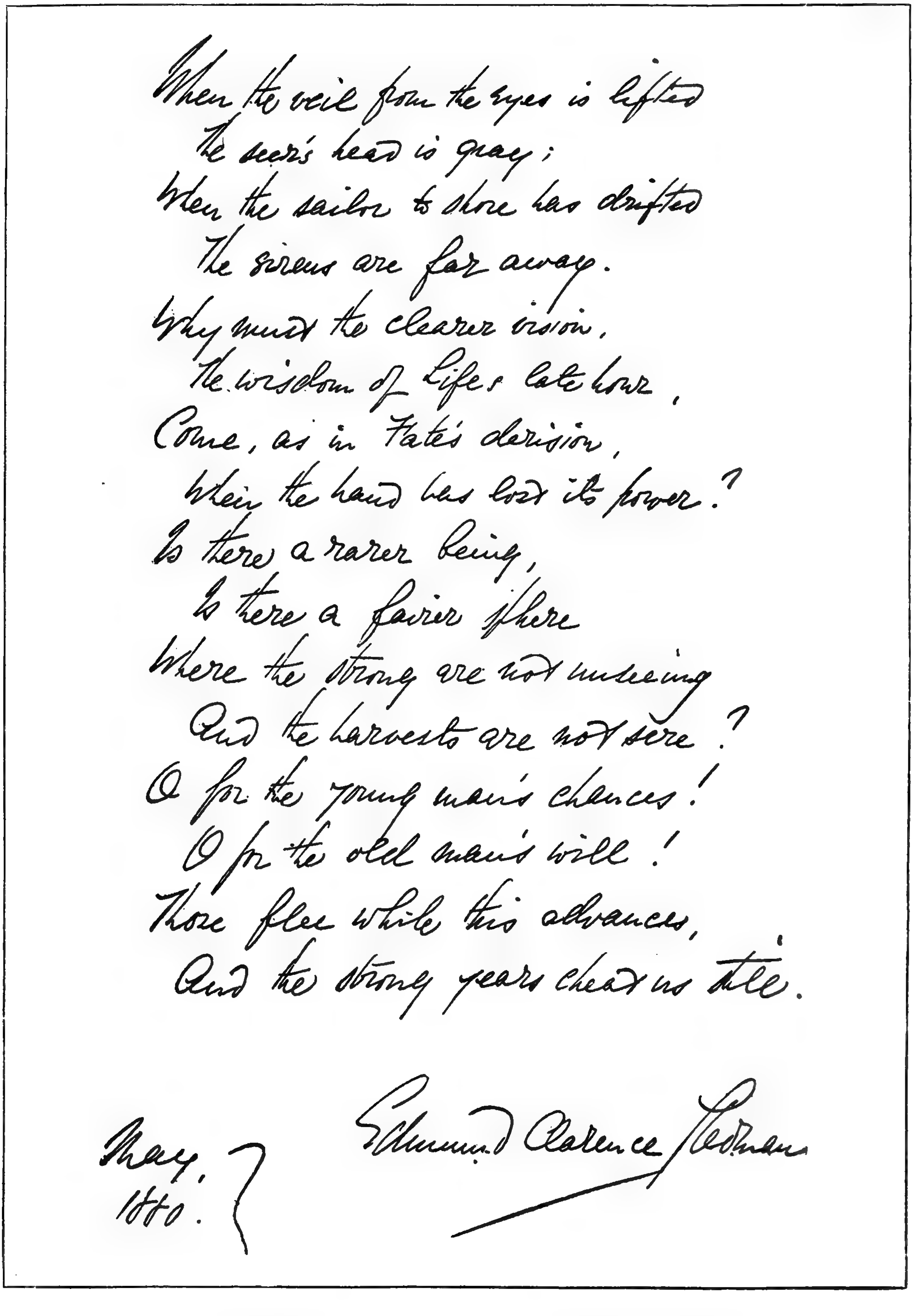
One of Edwin Booth's choicest friendships was that of Thomas Bailey Aldrich. The closest ties bound the two families. The romance of Booth's first marriage started in the Aldrich home on Beacon Hill, and it was Aldrich who, as a charter member of the Players' gave the club its name. Booth—grave, reserved—was a striking contrast to the poet Aldrich, with his fund of gaiety and easy grace. Aldrich once wrote: "Booth has been with us six weeks, acting wonderfully. We shall miss him sadly. He is a *great* actor. We love the boy. I like to mix his gloom with my sunshine."

I find no record in Booth's letters or biography of more than casual acquaintance with either the poet, critic, and essayist Stedman, or the poet and philosopher Emerson.

* * *

When Booth died in his room at the Players, on June 7, 1893, he was reading a volume of Winter's poems, which lay open by his side. He was buried at Mount Auburn, and there many friends parted with the man they had so reverenced and loved. Aldrich has described the scene with rare gentleness and beauty:

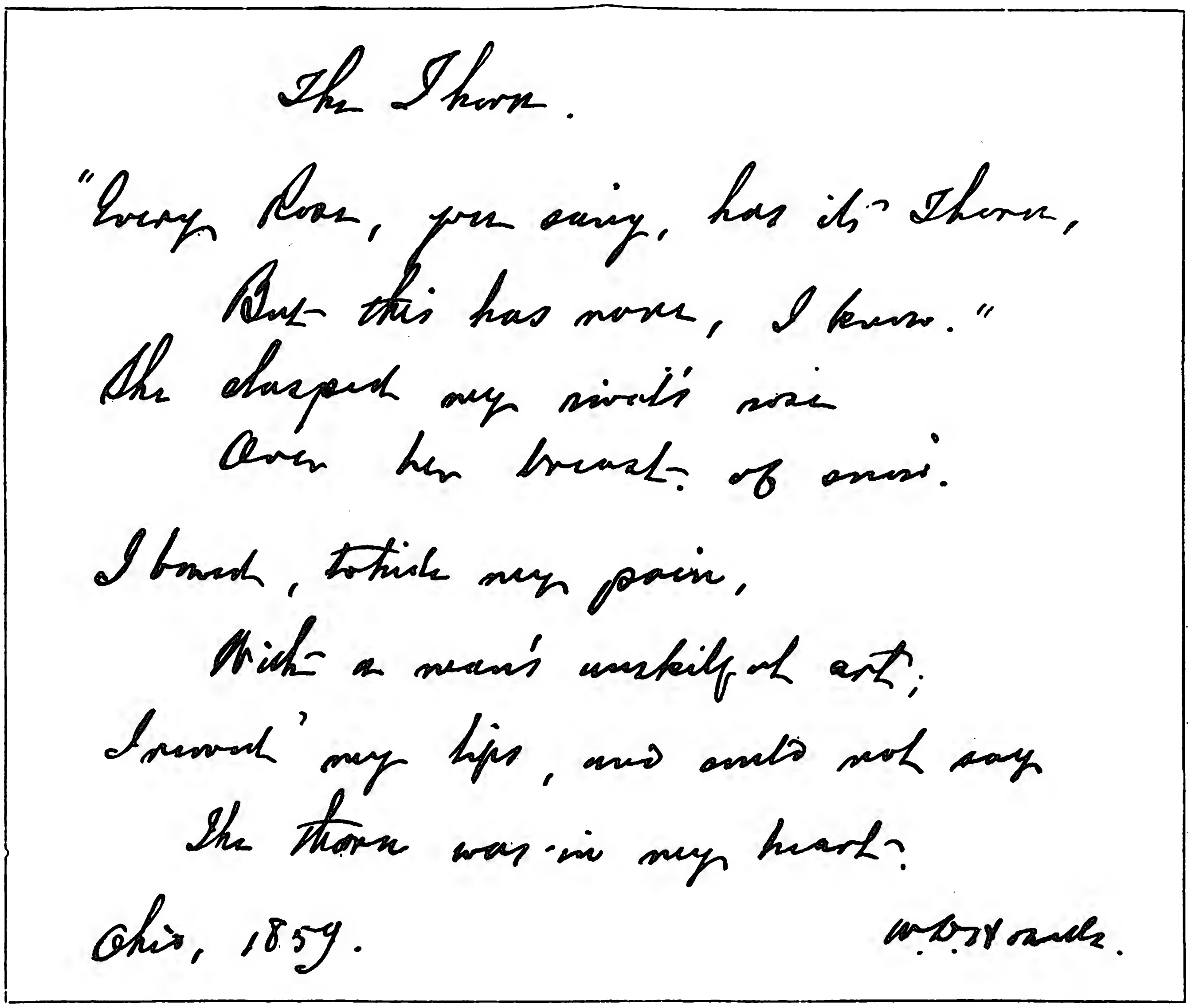
"There in the tender afterglow two or three hundred men and women stood silent, with bowed heads. A single bird, in a nest hidden somewhere by, twittered



When the veil from the eyes is lifted
The seer's head is gray;
When the sailor to shore has drifted
The sirens are far away.
Why must the clearer vision,
The wisdom of Life's late hour,
Come, as in Fate's derision,
When the hand has lost its power?
Is there a rarer being,
Is there a fairer sphere
Where the strong are not unseeing
And the harvests are not sere?
O for the young man's chances!
O for the old man's will!
Those flee while this advances,
And the strong years cheat us still.

Edmund Clarence Stedman

May,
1880.

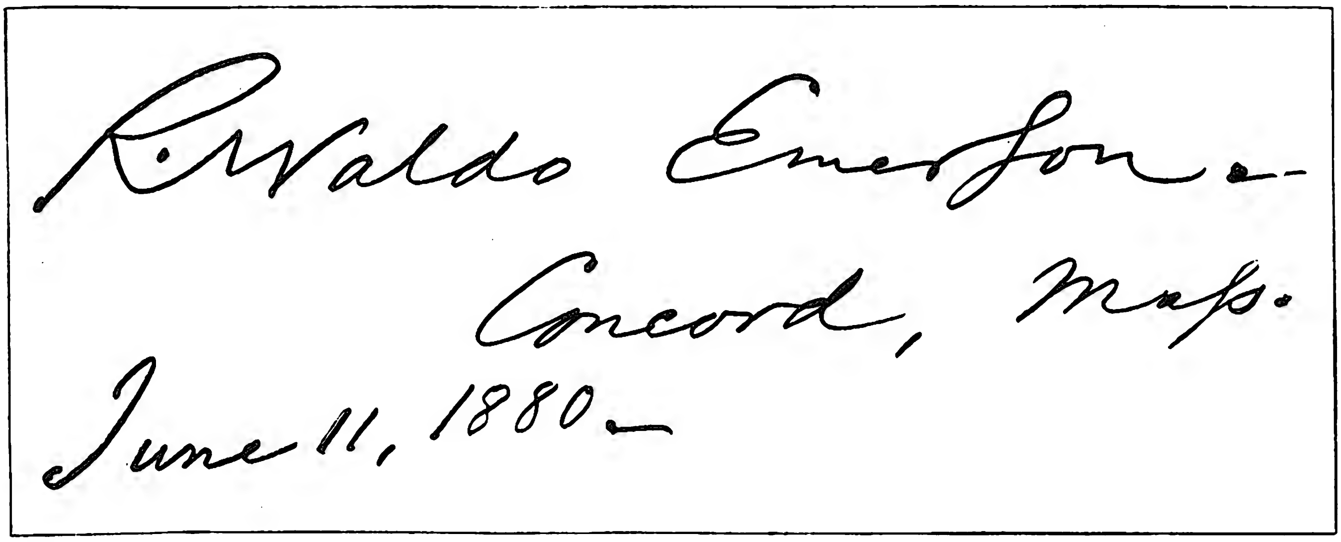


The Thorn.

"Every Rose, you say, has its Thorn,
But this has none, I know."
She clasped my rival's rose
Over her breast of snow.

I bowed, to hide my pain,
With a man's unskilful art;
I moved my lips, and could not say
The thorn was in my heart.

Ohio, 1859. W. D. Howells.



R. Waldo Emerson.
Concord, Mass.
June 11, 1880.

from time to time. The soft June air, blowing across the upland, brought with it the scent of syringa blossoms from the slope below. Overhead and among the trees the twilight was gathering. 'Good night, sweet Prince!' I said, under my breath. . . . Then I thought of years and years that had been made rich with his presence, and of the years that were to come . . . and if there had not been a crowd of people, I would have buried my face in the greensward and wept, as men may not do, and women may. And thus we left him."

A TRAVELER'S TALE[*]

By WASHINGTON IRVING

Washington Irving

The Spectre Bridegroom

He that supper for is dight,
He lyes full cold, I trow, this night!
Yestreen to chamber I him led,
This night Gray-Steel has made his bed.
—*Sir Eger, Sir Grahame, and Sir Gray-Steel.*

On the summit of one of the heights of the Odenwald, a wild and romantic tract of Upper Germany, that lies not far from the confluence of the Main and the Rhine, there stood, many, many years since, the Castle of the Baron Von Landshort. It is now quite fallen to decay, and almost buried among beech trees and dark firs; above which, however, its old watch-tower may still be seen struggling, like the former possessor I have mentioned, to carry a high head, and look down upon the neighbouring country.

The baron was a dry branch of the great family of Katzenellenbogen,[†] and inherited the relics of the property and all the pride of his ancestors. Though the warlike disposition of his predecessors had much impaired the family possessions, yet the baron still endeavoured to keep up some show of former state. The times were peaceable, and the German nobles, in general, had abandoned their inconvenient old castles, perched like eagles' nests among the mountains, and had built more convenient residences in the valleys: still the baron remained proudly drawn up in his little fortress, cherishing, with hereditary inveteracy, all the old family feuds; so that he was on ill terms with some of his nearest neighbours, on account of disputes that had happened between their great-great-grandfathers.

The baron had but one child, a daughter; but Nature, when she grants but one child, always compensates by making it a prodigy; and so it was with the daughter of the baron. All the nurses, gossips, and country cousins assured her father that she had not her equal for beauty in all Germany; and who should know better than they? She had, moreover, been brought up with great care under the superintendence of two maiden aunts, who had spent some years of their early life at one of the little German courts, and were skilled in all the branches of knowledge necessary to the education of a fine lady. Under their instruction she became a miracle of accomplishments. By the time she was eighteen, she could embroider to admiration, and had worked whole histories of the saints in tapestry, with such strength of expression in their countenances, that they looked like so many souls in purgatory. She could read without great difficulty, and had spelled her way through several church legends and almost all the chivalric wonders of the Heldenbuch. She had even made considerable proficiency in writing; could sign her own name without missing a letter, and so legibly that her aunts could read it without spectacles. She excelled in making little elegant, good-for-nothing lady-like knick-knacks of all kinds; was versed in the most abstruse dancing of the day; played a number of airs on the harp and guitar; and knew all the tender ballads of the Minnelieders by heart.

Her aunts, too, having been great flirts and coquettes in their younger days, were admirably calculated to be vigilant guardians and strict censors of the conduct of their niece; for there is no duenna so rigidly prudent, and inexorably decorous, as a superannuated coquette. She was rarely suffered out of their sight; never went beyond the domains of the castle, unless well attended, or rather well watched; had continual lectures read to her about strict decorum and implicit obedience; and, as to the men—pah!—she was taught to hold them at such a distance, and in such absolute distrust, that, unless properly authorized, she would not have cast a glance upon the handsomest cavalier in the world—no, not if he were even dying at her feet.

The good effects of this system were wonderfully apparent. The young lady was a pattern of docility and correctness. While others were wasting their sweetness in the glare of the world, and liable to be plucked and thrown aside by every hand, she was coyly blooming into fresh and lovely womanhood

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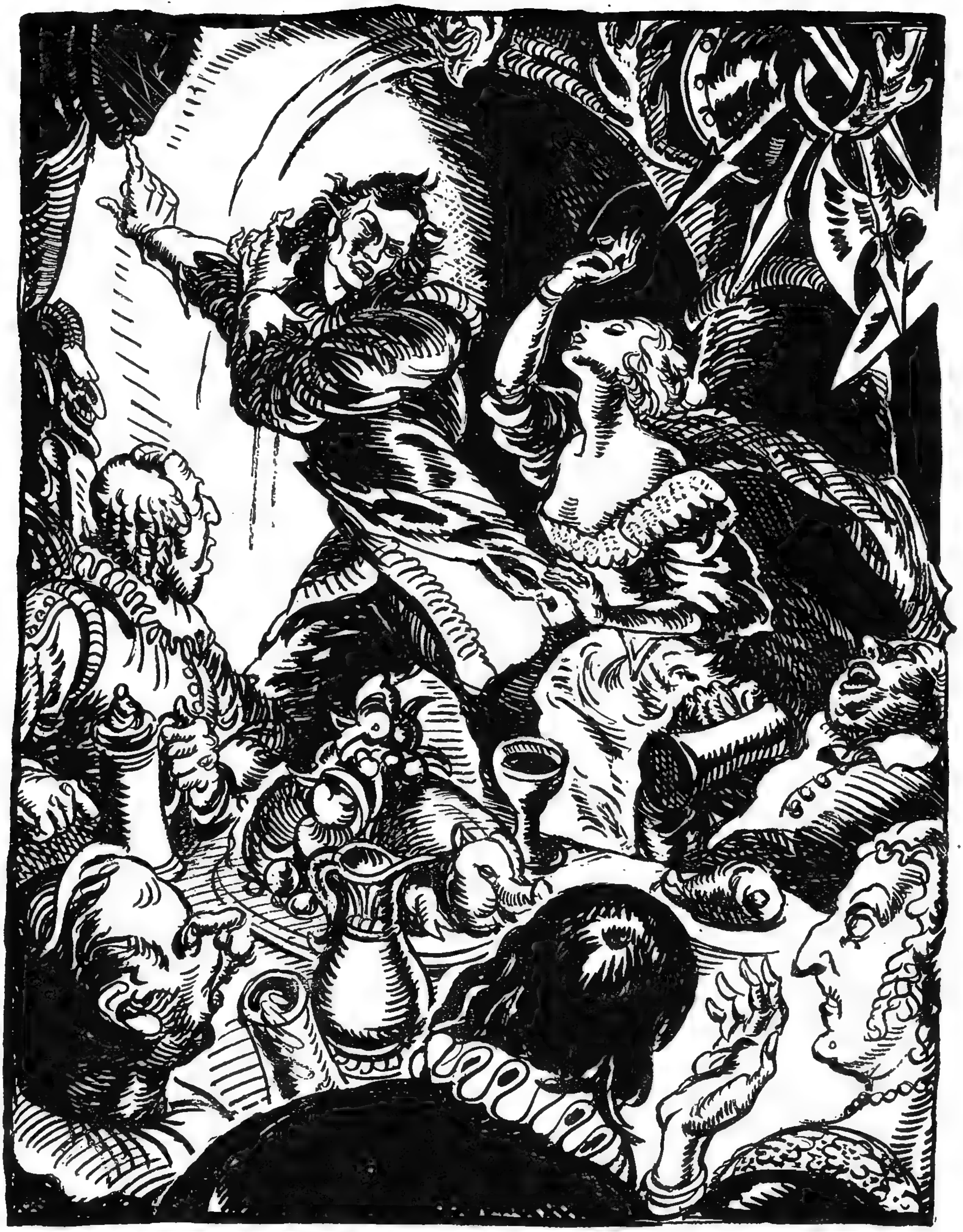
[†] i.e. Cat's-Elbow. The name of a family of those parts very powerful in former times. The appellation, we are told, was given in compliment to a peerless dame of the family, celebrated for her fine arm.

[*] The erudite reader, well versed in good-for-nothing lore, will perceive that the above Tale must have been suggested to the old Swiss [by whom the tale is supposed to be told] by a little French anecdote, a circumstance said to have taken place at Paris.

Drawings by James Daugherty

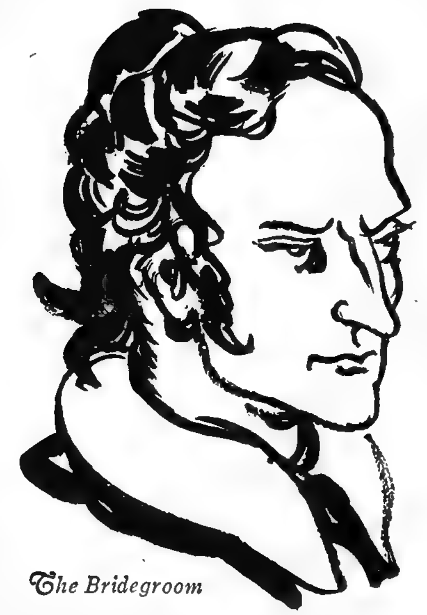


"My engagement is with no bride—the worms! the worms expect me!"

under the protection of those immaculate spinsters, like a rose-bud blushing forth among guardian thorns. Her aunts looked upon her with pride and exultation, and vaunted that though all the other young ladies in the world might go astray, yet, thank Heaven, nothing of the kind could happen to the heiress of Katzenellenbogen.

But, however scantily the Baron Von Landshort might be provided with children, his household was by no means a small one; for Providence had enriched him with abundance of poor relations. They, one and all, possessed the affectionate disposition common to humble relatives; were wonderfully attached to the baron, and took every possible occasion to come in swarms and enliven the castle. All family festivals were commemorated by these good people at the baron's expense; and when they were filled with good cheer, they would declare that there was nothing on earth so delightful as these family meetings, these jubilees of the heart.

The baron, though a small man, had a large soul, and it swelled with satisfaction at the consciousness of being the greatest man in the little world about him. He loved to tell long stories about the stark old warriors whose portraits looked grimly down from the walls around, and he found no listeners equal to those who fed at his expense. He was much given to the marvelous, and a firm believer in all those supernatural tales with which every mountain and valley in Germany abounds. The faith of his guests exceeded even his own: they listened to every tale of wonder with open eyes and mouth, and never failed to be astonished, even though repeated for the hundredth time. Thus lived the Baron Von Landshort, the oracle of his table, the absolute monarch of his little territory, and happy, above all things, in the persuasion that he was the wisest man of the age.



The Bridegroom

At the time of which my story treats, there was a great family gathering at the castle, on an affair of the utmost importance: it was to receive the destined bridegroom of the baron's daughter. A negotiation had been carried on between the father and an old nobleman of Bavaria, to unite the dignity of their houses by the marriage of their children. The preliminaries had been conducted with proper punctilio. The young people were betrothed without seeing each other; and the time was appointed for the marriage ceremony. The young Count Von Altenburg had been recalled from the army for the purpose, and was actually on his way to the baron's to receive his bride. Missives had even been received from him, from Wurtzburg, where he was accidentally detained, mentioning the day and hour when he might be expected to arrive.

The castle was in a tumult of preparation to give him a suitable welcome. The fair bride had been decked out with uncommon care. The two aunts had superintended her toilet, and quarreled the whole morning about every article of her dress. The young lady had taken advantage of their contest to follow the bent of her own taste; and fortunately it was a good one. She looked as lovely as youthful bridegroom could desire; and the flutter of expectation heightened the luster of her charms.

THE SUFFUSIONS that mantled her face and neck, the gentle heaving of the bosom, the eye now and then lost in reverie, all betrayed the soft tumult that was going on in her little heart. The aunts were continually hovering around her; for maiden aunts are apt to take great interest in affairs of this nature. They were giving her a word of staid counsel how to deport herself, what to say, and in what manner to receive the expected lover.

The baron was no less busied in preparations. He had, in truth, nothing exactly to do; but he was naturally a fuming, bustling little man, and could not remain passive when all the world was in a hurry. He worried from top to bottom of the castle with an air of infinite anxiety; he continually called the servants from their work to exhort them to be diligent; and buzzed about every hall and chamber, as idly restless and importunate as a blue-bottle fly on a warm summer's day.

In the meantime the fatted calf had been killed; the forests had rung with the clamour of the huntsmen; the kitchen was crowded with good cheer; the cellars had yielded up whole oceans of *Rhein-wein* and *Ferne-wein;* and even the great Heidelburg tun had been laid under contribution. Everything was ready to receive the distinguished guest with *Saus und Braus* in the true spirit of German hospitality—but the guest delayed to make his appearance. Hour rolled after hour. The sun, that had poured his downward rays upon the rich forest of the Odenwald, now just gleamed along the summits of the mountains. The baron mounted the highest tower and strained his eyes in hopes of catching a distant sight of the count and his attendants. Once he thought he beheld them; the sound of horns came floating from the valley, prolonged by the mountain echoes. A number of horsemen were seen far below, slowly advancing along the road; but when they had nearly reached the foot of the mountain, they suddenly struck off in a different direction. The last ray of sunshine departed—the bats began to flit by in the twilight—the road grew dimmer and dimmer to the view; and nothing appeared stirring in it but now and then a peasant lagging homeward from his labour.

While the old castle of Landshort was in this state of perplexity, a very interesting scene was transacting in a different part of the Odenwald.

The young Count Von Altenburg was tranquilly pursuing his route in that sober jog-trot way, in which a man travels toward matrimony when his friends have taken all the trouble and uncertainty of courtship off his hands, and a bride is waiting for him, as certainly as a dinner at the end of his journey. He had encountered, at Wurtzburg, a youthful companion-in-arms, with whom he had seen some service on the frontiers; Herman Von Starkenfaust, one of the stoutest hands and worthiest hearts of German chivalry, who was now returning from the army. His father's castle was not far distant from the old fortress of Landshort, although an hereditary feud rendered the families hostile and strangers to each other.

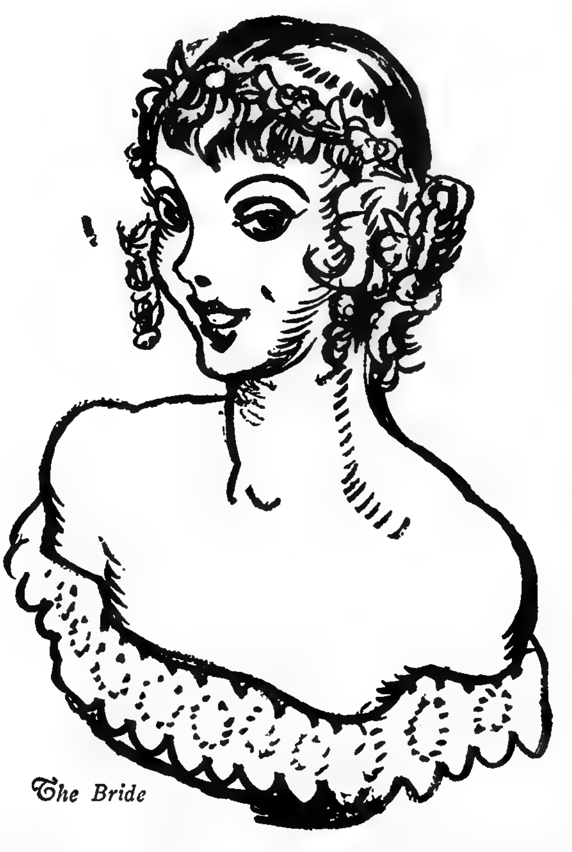
In the warm-hearted moment of recognition, the young friends related all their past adventures and fortunes, and the count gave the whole history of his intended nuptials with a young lady whom he had never seen, but of whose charms he had received the most enrapturing descriptions.

As the route of the friends lay in the same direction, they agreed to perform the rest of their journey together; and, that they might do it the more leisurely, set off from Wurtzburg at an early hour, the count having given directions for his retinue to follow and overtake him.

They beguiled their wayfaring with recollections of their military scenes and adventures; but the count was apt to be a little tedious, now and then, about the reputed charms of his bride, and the felicity that awaited him.

In this way they had entered among the mountains of the Odenwald and were traversing one of its most lonely and thickly wooded passes. It is well known that the forests of Germany have always been as much infested by robbers as its castles by spectres; and, at this time, the former were particularly numerous, from the hordes of disbanded soldiers wandering about the country. It will not appear extraordinary, therefore, that the cavaliers were attacked by a gang of these stragglers, in the midst of the forest. They defended themselves with bravery, but were nearly overpowered, when the count's retinue arrived to their assistance. At sight of them the robbers fled, but not until the count had received a mortal wound. He was slowly and carefully conveyed back to the city of Wurtzburg, and a friar summoned from a neighbouring convent, who was famous for his skill in administering to both soul and body; but half of his skill was superfluous; the moments of the unfortunate count were numbered.

With his dying breath he entreated his friend to repair instantly to the castle of Landshort and explain the fatal cause of his not keeping his appointment with his bride. Though not the most ardent of lovers, he was one of the most punctilious of men, and appeared earnestly solicitous that his mission should be speedily and courteously executed. "Unless this is done," said he, "I shall not sleep quietly in my grave!" He repeated these last words with peculiar solemnity. A request at a moment so impressive admitted no hesitation. Starkenfaust endeavoured to soothe him to calmness; promised faithfully to execute his wish, and gave him his hand in solemn pledge. The dying man pressed it in acknowledgment, but soon lapsed into delirium—raved about his bride—his engagements—his plighted word; ordered his horse, that he might ride to the castle of Landshort; and expired in the fancied act of vaulting into the saddle.


The Bride

Starkenfaust bestowed a sigh and a soldier's tear on the untimely fate of his comrade; and then pondered on the awkward mission he had undertaken. His heart was heavy and his head perplexed, for he was to present himself an unbidden guest among hostile people, and to damp their festivity with tidings fatal to their hopes. Still there were certain whisperings of curiosity in his bosom to see this far-famed beauty of Katzenellenbogen, so cautiously shut up from the world; for he was a passionate admirer of the sex, and there was a dash of eccentricity and enterprise in his character that made him fond of all singular adventure.

PREVIOUS TO HIS DEPARTURE he made all due arrangements with the holy fraternity of the convent for the funeral solemnities of his friend, who was to be buried in the cathedral of Wurtzburg, near some of his illustrious relatives; and the mourning retinue of the count took charge of his remains.

It is now high time that we should return to the ancient family of Katzenellenbogen, who were impatient for their guest, and still more for their dinner; and to the worthy little baron, whom we left airing himself on the watch-tower.

Night closed in, but still no guest arrived. The baron descended from the tower in despair. The banquet, which had been delayed from hour to hour, could no longer be postponed. The meats were already overdone; the cook in an agony; and the whole household had the look of a garrison that had been reduced by famine. The baron was obliged reluctantly to give orders for the feast without the presence of the guest. All were seated at table, and just on the point of commencing, when the sound of a horn from without the gate gave notice of the approach of a stranger. Another long blast filled the old courts of the castle with its echoes, and was answered by the warder from the walls. The baron hastened to receive his future son-in-law.

The drawbridge had been let down, and the stranger was before the gate. He was a tall, gallant cavalier, mounted on a black steed. His countenance was pale, but he had a beaming, romantic eye and an air of stately melancholy. The baron was a little mortified that he should have come in this simple, solitary style. His dignity for a moment was ruffled, and he felt disposed to consider it a want of proper respect for the important occasion and the important family with which he was to be connected. He pacified himself, however, with the conclusion that it must have been youthful impatience which had induced him thus to spur on sooner than his attendants.

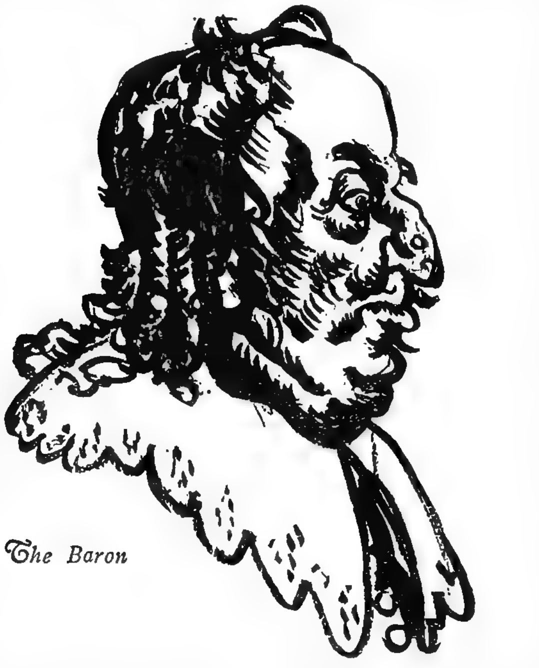
"I am sorry," said the stranger, "to break in upon you thus unseasonably——"

Here the baron interrupted him with a world of compliments and greetings; for, to tell the truth, he prided himself upon his courtesy and eloquence. The stranger attempted, once or twice, to stem the torrent of words, but in vain, so he bowed his head and suffered it to flow on. By the time the baron had come to a pause, they had reached the inner court of the castle; and the stranger was again about to speak when he was once more interrupted by the appearance of the female part of the family, leading forth the shrinking and blushing bride. He gazed on her for a moment as one entranced; it seemed as if his whole soul beamed forth in the gaze and rested upon that lovely form. One of the maiden aunts whispered something in her ear; she made an effort to speak; her moist blue eye was timidly raised, gave a shy glance of inquiry on the stranger, and was cast again to the ground. The words died away, but there was a sweet smile playing about her lips and a soft dimpling of the cheek that showed her glance had not been unsatisfactory. It was impossible for a girl of the fond age of eighteen, highly predisposed for love and matrimony, not to be pleased with so gallant a cavalier.

The late hour at which the guest had arrived left no time for parley. The baron was peremptory, and deferred all particular conversation until the morning, and led the way to the untasted banquet.

It was served up in the great hall of the castle. Around the walls hung the hard-favoured portraits of the heroes of the house of Katzenellenbogen and the trophies which they had gained in the field and in the chase. Hacked corslets, splintered jousting spears and tattered banners were mingled with the spoils of sylvan warfare; the jaws of the wolf and the tusks of the boar grinned horribly among cross-bows and battle-axes, and a huge pair of antlers branched immediately over the head of the youthful bridegroom.

The cavalier took but little notice of the company or the entertainment. He scarcely tasted the banquet, but seemed absorbed in admiration of his bride. He conversed in a low tone that could not be overheard—for the language of love is never loud; but where is the female ear so dull that it cannot catch the softest whisper of the lover? There was a mingled tenderness and gravity in his manner that appeared to have a powerful effect upon the young lady. Her colour came and went as she listened with deep attention. Now and then she made some blushing reply, and, when his eye was turned away, she would steal a sidelong glance at his romantic countenance and heave a gentle sigh of tender happiness. It was evident that the young couple were completely enamoured. The aunts, who were deeply versed in the mysteries of the heart, declared that they had fallen in love with each other at first sight.


The Baron

The feast went on merrily, or at least noisily, for the guests were all blessed with those keen appetites that attend upon light purses and mountain air. The baron told his best and longest stories, and never had he told them so well or with such great effect. If there was anything marvelous, his auditors were lost in astonishment; and if anything facetious, they were sure to laugh exactly in the right place. The baron, it is true, like most great men, was too dignified to utter any joke but a dull one; it was always enforced, however, by a bumper of excellent Hockheimer; and even a dull joke, at one's own table, served up with jolly old wine, is irresistible. Many good things were said by poorer and keener wits, that would not bear repeating, except on similar occasions; many sly speeches whispered in ladies' ears, that almost convulsed them with suppressed laughter; and a song or two roared out by a poor but merry and broad-faced cousin of the baron, that absolutely made the maiden aunts hold up their fans.

Amidst all this revelry, the stranger guest maintained a most singular and unseasonable gravity. His countenance assumed a deeper cast of dejection as the evening advanced; and, strange as it may appear, even the baron's jokes seemed only to render him the more melancholy. At times he was lost in thought, and at times there was a perturbed and restless wandering of the eye that bespoke a mind but ill at ease. His conversations with the bride became more and more earnest and mysterious. Lowering clouds began to steal over the fair serenity of her brow and tremors to run through her tender frame.

All this could not escape the notice of the company. Their gaiety was chilled by the unaccountable gloom of the bridegroom; their spirits were infected; whispers and glances were interchanged, accompanied by shrugs and dubious shakes of the head. The song and the laugh grew less and less frequent; there were dreary pauses in the conversation, which were at length succeeded by wild tales and supernatural legends. One dismal story produced another still more dismal, and the baron nearly frightened some of the ladies into hysterics with the history of the goblin horseman that carried away the fair Leonora; a dreadful story, which has since been put into excellent verse, and is read and believed by all the world.

The bridegroom listened to this tale with profound attention. He kept his eyes steadily fixed on the baron, and, as the story drew to a close, began gradually to rise from his seat, growing taller and taller, until, in the baron's entranced eye, he seemed almost to tower into a giant. The moment the tale was finished, he heaved a deep sigh and took a solemn farewell of the company. They were all amazement.

The baron was indeed perfectly thunderstruck. What! going to leave the castle at midnight? Why, everything was prepared for his reception; a chamber was ready for him if he wished to retire.

The stranger shook his head mournfully and mysteriously; "I must lay my head in a different chamber tonight!"

There was something in this reply, and the tone in which it was uttered, that made the baron's heart misgive him; but he rallied his forces and repeated his hospitable entreaties.

The stranger shook his head silently, but positively, at every offer; and, waving his farewell to the company, stalked slowly out of the hall. The maiden aunts were absolutely petrified—the bride hung her head and a tear stole to her eye.

The baron followed the stranger to the great court of the castle, where the black charger stood pawing the earth and snorting with impatience. When they had reached the portal, whose deep archway was dimly lighted by a cresset, the stranger paused and addressed the baron in a hollow tone of voice, which the vaulted roof rendered still more sepulchral.

"Now that we are alone," said he, "I will impart to you the reason of my going. I have a solemn, an indispensable engagement——"

"Why," said the baron, "cannot you send some one in your place?"

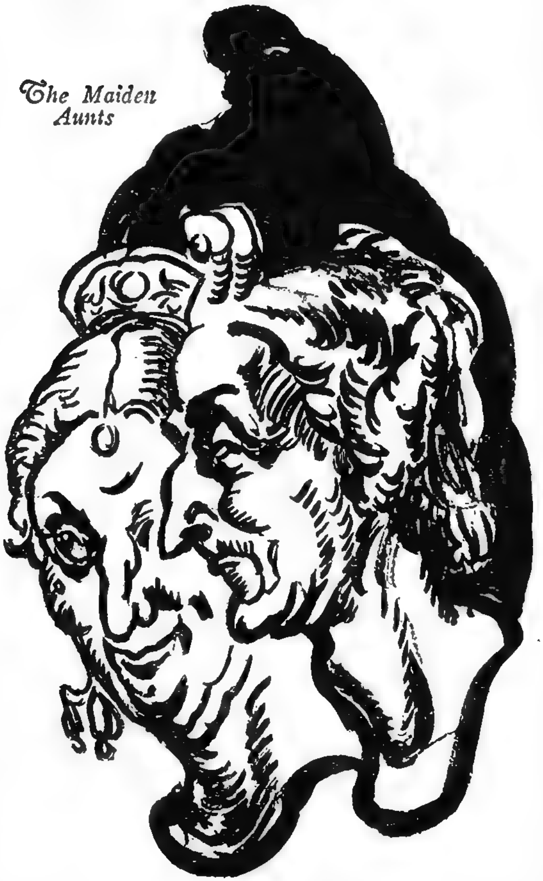
"It admits of no substitute—I must attend it in person—I must away to Wurtzburg cathedral——"

"Ay," said the baron, plucking up spirit, "but not until tomorrow—tomorrow you shall take your bride there."

"No! no!" replied the stranger, with tenfold solemnity, "my engagement is with no bride—the worms! the worms expect me! I am a dead man—I have been slain by robbers—my body lies at Wurtzburg—at midnight I am to be buried—the grave is waiting for me—I must keep my appointment!"

He sprang on his black charger, dashed over the drawbridge, and the clattering of his horse's hoofs was lost in the whistling of the night-blast.

The baron returned to the hall in the utmost consternation and related what had passed. Two ladies fainted outright, others sickened at the idea of having banqueted with a spectre. It was the opinion of some that this might be the wild huntsman, famous in German legend. Some talked of mountain sprites, of wood-demons, and of other supernatural beings, with which the good people of Germany have been so grievously harassed since time immemorial. One of the poor relations ventured to suggest that it might be some sportive evasion of the young cavalier, and that the very gloominess of the caprice seemed to accord with so melancholy a personage. This, however, drew on him the indignation of the whole company, and especially of the baron, who looked upon him as little better than an infidel; so that he was fain to abjure his heresy as speedily as possible and come into the faith of the true believers.


The Maiden Aunts

But whatever may have been the doubts entertained, they were completely put to an end by the arrival, next day, of regular missives, confirming the intelligence of the young count's murder and his interment in Wurtzburg cathedral.

The dismay at the castle may well be imagined. The baron shut himself up in his chamber. The guests, who had come to rejoice with him, could not think of abandoning him in his distress. They wandered about the courts or collected in groups in the hall, shaking their heads and shrugging their shoulders, at the troubles of so good a man; and sat longer than ever at table, and ate and drank more stoutly than ever, by way of keeping up their spirits. But the situation of the widowed bride was the most pitiable. To have lost a husband before she had even embraced him—and such a husband! If the very spectre could be so gracious and noble, what must have been the living man? She filled the house with lamentations.

On the night of the second day of her widowhood she had retired to her chamber, accompanied by one of her aunts, who insisted on sleeping with her. The aunt, who was one of the best tellers of ghost stories in all Germany, had just been recounting one of her longest, and had fallen asleep in the very midst of it. The chamber was remote and overlooked a small garden. The niece lay pensively gazing at the beams of the rising moon, as they trembled on the leaves of an aspen-tree before the lattice. The castle clock had just tolled midnight, when a soft strain of music stole up from the garden. She rose hastily from her bed and stepped lightly to the window. A tall figure stood among the shadows of the trees. As it raised its head, a beam of moonlight fell upon the countenance. Heaven and earth! she beheld the Spectre Bridegroom! A loud shriek at that moment burst upon her ear, and her aunt, who had been awakened by the music, and had followed her silently to the window, fell into her arms. When she looked again, the spectre had disappeared.

Of the two females, the aunt now required the most soothing, for she was perfectly beside herself with terror. As to the young lady, there was something, even in the spectre of her lover, that seemed endearing. There was still the semblance of manly beauty; and though the shadow of a man is but little calculated to satisfy the affections of a love-sick girl, yet, where the substance is not to be had, even that is consoling. The aunt declared she would never sleep in that chamber again; the niece, for once, was refractory, and declared as strongly that she would sleep in no other in the castle: the consequence was, that she had to sleep in it alone; but she drew a promise from her aunt not to relate the story of the spectre, lest she should be denied the only melancholy pleasure left her on earth—that of inhabiting the chamber over which the guardian shade of her lover kept its nightly vigils.

How long the good old lady would have observed this promise is uncertain, for she dearly loved to talk of the marvelous, and there is a triumph in being the first to tell a frightful story; it is, however, still quoted in the neighbourhood, as a memorable instance of female secrecy, that she kept it to herself for a whole week; when she was suddenly absolved from all further restraint by intelligence brought to the breakfast-table one morning that the young lady was not to be found. Her room was empty—the bed had not been slept in—the window was open, and the bird had flown!

The astonishment and concern with which the intelligence was received can only be imagined by those who have witnessed the agitation which the mishaps of a great man cause among his friends. Even the poor relations paused for a moment from the indefatigable labours of the trencher; when the aunt, who had at first been struck speechless, wrung her hands and shrieked out: "The goblin! the goblin! she's carried away by the goblin!"

In a few words she related the fearful scene of the garden and concluded that the spectre must have carried off his bride. Two of the domestics corroborated the opinion, for they had heard the clattering of a horse's hoofs down the mountain about midnight, and had no doubt that it was the spectre on his black charger, bearing her away to the tomb. All present were struck with the direful probability; for events of the kind are extremely common in Germany, as many well-authenticated histories bear witness.

What a lamentable situation was that of the poor baron! What a heart-rending dilemma for a fond father and a member of the great family of Katzenellenbogen! His only daughter had either been rapt away to the grave, or he was to have some wood-demon for a son-in-law, and, perchance, a troop of goblin grandchildren. As usual, he was completely bewildered and all the castle in an uproar. The men were ordered to take horse and scour every road and path and glen of the Odenwald. The baron himself had just drawn on his jack-boots, girded on his sword, and was about to mount his steed to sally forth on the doubtful quest, when he was brought to a pause by a new apparition. A lady was seen approaching the castle, mounted on a palfrey, attended by a cavalier on horseback. She galloped up to the gate, sprang from her horse, and, falling at the baron's feet, embraced his knees. It was his lost daughter, and her companion—the Spectre Bridegroom! The baron was astounded. He looked at his daughter, then at the spectre, and almost doubted the evidence of his senses. The latter, too, was wonderfully improved in his appearance since his visit to the world of spirits. His dress was splendid and set off a noble figure of manly symmetry. He was no longer pale and melancholy. His fine countenance was flushed with the glow of youth, and joy rioted in his large, dark eye.

The mystery was soon cleared up. The cavalier (for, in truth, as you must have known all the while, he was no goblin) announced himself as Sir Herman Von Starkenfaust. He related his adventure with the young count. He told how he had hastened to the castle to deliver the unwelcome tidings, but that the eloquence of the baron had interrupted him in every attempt to tell his tale. How the sight of the bride had completely captivated him, and that, to pass a few hours near her, he had tacitly suffered the mistake to continue. How he had been sorely perplexed in what way to make a decent retreat, until the baron's goblin stories had suggested his eccentric exit. How, fearing the feudal hostility of the family, he had repeated his visits by stealth—had haunted the garden beneath the young lady's window—had wooed—had won—had borne away in triumph—and, in a word, had wedded the fair.

Under any other circumstances the baron would have been inflexible, for he was tenacious of paternal authority and devoutly obstinate in all family feuds; but he loved his daughter; he had lamented her as lost; he rejoiced to find her still alive; and, though her husband was of a hostile house, yet, thank Heaven, he was not a goblin. There was something, it must be acknowledged, that did not exactly accord with his notions of strict veracity, in the joke the knight had passed upon him of his being a dead man; but several old friends present, who had served in the wars, assured him that every stratagem was excusable in love, and that the cavalier was entitled to especial privilege, having lately served as a trooper.

Matters, therefore, were happily arranged. The baron pardoned the young couple on the spot. The revels at the castle were resumed. The poor relations overwhelmed this new member of the family with loving kindness; he was so gallant, so generous—and so rich. The aunts, it is true, were somewhat scandalized that their system of strict seclusion and passive obedience should be so badly exemplified, but attributed it all to their negligence in not having the windows grated. One of them was particularly mortified at having her marvelous story marred, and that the only spectre she had ever seen should turn out a counterfeit; but the niece seemed perfectly happy at having found him substantial flesh and blood—and so the story ends.

Nothing is so embarrassing as the first tête-à-tête, *when there is everything to say, unless it be the last, when everything has been said.* Roqueplan.

Three Lovers Who Lost

By
JAMES STEPHENS

Woodcuts by
Richard Bennett

YOUNG MR. O'GRADY was in love. It was the first time he had been in love, and it was all sufficiently startling. He seemed to have leaped from boyhood to manhood at a stroke, and the things which had pretended to be of moment yesterday were today discovered to have only the very meanest importance. Different affairs now occupied him. A little while ago his cogitations had included where he would walk to on the next Sunday, whether his aunt in Meath Street would lend him the price of a ticket for the coming Bank Holiday excursion, whether his brother would be using his bicycle on Saturday afternoon, and whether the packet of cigarettes which he was momently smoking contained as many cigarettes as could be got elsewhere for two pence.

These things were no longer noteworthy. Clothing had assumed an importance he could scarcely have believed in. Boots, neckties, the conduct of one's hat and of one's head, the progress of one's mustache, one's bearing toward people in the street and in the house, this and that social observance—all these things took on a new and important dignity. He bought a walking-stick, a card-case, a purse, a pipe with a glass bottom wherein one could observe one's own nicotine inexorably accumulating. He bought a book on etiquette and a pot of paste for making mustaches grow in spite of providence, and one day he insisted on himself drinking a half glass of whisky—it tasted sadly, but he drank it without a grimace. Etiquette and whisky! these things have to be done, and one might as well do them with an air. He was in love, he was grown up, he was a man, and he lived fearlessly up to his razor and his lady.

From the book on etiquette he exhumed a miscellany of useful and peculiar wisdom. Following information about the portage of knives and forks at incredible dinners, he discovered that a well-bred person always speaks to the young lady's parents before he speaks to the young lady upon whose heart and hand he has tender designs. He straightened his shoulders. It would be almost as bad, he thought, as having to drink whisky, but if it had to be done—why, he would not shrink from this any more than he had from that. He set forth on the tingling errand.

MR. O'REILLY was a scrivener, a husband and a father. He made copies of all kinds of documents for a living. He also copied maps. It has been said that scriveners have to get drunk at least twice a week in order to preserve their sanity; but the person whose miserable employment is to draw copies of maps is more desperately environed than an ordinary scrivener. It was Mr. O'Reilly's misfortune that he was unable to get drunk. He disliked liquor, and, moreover, it disagreed with him. He had, to paraphrase Lamb, toiled after liquor as other people toil after virtue, but the nearer he got the less did he like it. As a consequence of this enforced decency, the ill-temper which is the normal state of scriveners had surged and buzzed around him so long that he had quite forgotten what a good temper was like. It might be said that he hated everyone, not excepting his wife and daughter. He could avoid other people, but these he could never escape from. They wanted to talk to him when he wanted to be let alone. They worried him with this and that domestic question or uproar. He would gladly have sold them both as slaves to the Barbadoes, or presented them to the seraglio of any eastern potentate. There they were! and he often gnashed his teeth and grinned at them in amazement because they were there.

ON THE EVENING WHEN young O'Grady sallied forth to ask him for the hand of his daughter in marriage, he was sitting at supper with his consort.

Mr. O'Reilly took the last slice of bread from under his wife's hand. It was loot, so he ate it with an extra relish, and his good lady waddled away to get more bread from the cupboard.

"Everything's a trouble," said he, as she cut the loaf. "Doesn't it make you think of the hymn 'I'm but a stranger here, heaven is my home'?"

"No, ma'm," said her husband, "it does not. Where is Julia Elizabeth?" and he daringly and skilfully abstracted the next slice of bread while his wife was laying down the butter knife.

"I wish," said she, as she reached for the knife again, "I wish you would give me a chance, O'Reilly: you eat much quicker than I do, God help me!"

"I wish," rapped her husband fiercely, "that you would give a plain answer to a plain question. Now then, ma'm, in two words, where is that girl? My whole life seems to be occupied in asking that question, and yours seems to be spent in dodging the answer to it."

"I don't know," replied his wife severely, "and that's three words."

"You don't know!" he looked around in helpless appeal and condemnation. "What sort of an answer is that for a mother to give about her daughter?" and under cover of his wrath he stole the next slice of bread.

His wife also became angry—she put her plate in her lap and sat up at him—

"Don't barge me, man," said she. "A nice daughter to have to give such an answer about. Leave me alone now, for I'm not well, I say, on the head of her. I never know where she does be. One night it's (she endeavoured to reproduce her daughter's soprano) 'I am going to a dance, mother, at the Durkins'——"

"Ha'penny hops!" said her husband fiercely. "Can't you cut me a bit of bread!"

"And another night, she wants 'to go out to see Mary Durkan.'"

"I know her well, a big hat and no morals—a bankrupt's baggage."

"And the night after she wants 'to go to the theatre, ma.'"

"Dens of infamy," said he. "If I had my way I'd shut them all up and put the actors in jail, with their hamleting and gamy-acting and ha-ha'ing out of them."

"I can't keep her in," said his wife, wringing her hands, "and I won't try to any longer. I get a headache when I talk to her, so I do. Last night, when I mentioned about her going out with that Rorke man, she turned round as cool as you please and told me to 'shut up.' Her own mother!" and she surveyed Providence with a condemnatory eye.

At this point her husband swung his long arm and arrested the slice of bread in his wife's lap.

"If she spoke to me that way," he grinned, "I'll bet I'd astonish her."

His wife looked in amazement from her lap to his plate, but she had ability for only one quarrel at a time.

"And doesn't she talk to you like that? You never say a word to her but she has a look in her eye that's next door to calling you a fool. I don't know where she is at all today."

"What time did she go out?"

"After breakfast this morning."

"And now it's supper-time—ha! that's good! Can't you give me a bit of bread, or do you want to eat the whole loaf yourself? Try to remember that I do pay for my food."

With an angry shake of the head his wife began to cut the loaf, and continued speaking—

"'Where are you going to, Julia Elizabeth?' said I. 'Out,' said she, and not another word could I get from her. Her own mother, mind you, and her best clothes——"

Mr. O'Reilly ate the last slice of bread and arose from the table.

"I suppose," said he, "she is loafing about the streets with some young puppy who has nothing of his own but a cigarette and a walking-stick, and they both borrowed. I'll have a talk with her when she comes in, and we'll see if she tells me to shut up."

The door banged, the room shook, and Mrs. O'Reilly settled to her frustrated tea, but her thoughts still ran on her daughter.

It was at this point that, directed by love and etiquette, Mr. O'Grady knocked at the door. Mrs. O'Reilly was again cutting the loaf in an exasperation which was partly hunger and partly maternal, and, as she cut, she communed with herself—

"As if," said she, "I haven't enough trouble trying to keep a cranky man like her pa in good humour, without being plagued by Julia Elizabeth." She paused, for there was a knock at the door. "If," said she to the door, "you are a woman with ferns in a pot I don't want you, and I don't want Dublin Bay herrings, or boot-laces either, so you can go away. The crankiness of that man is more than tongue can tell. As Miss Carty says, I shouldn't stand it for an hour. Come in! can't you?—and well she may say it, and she a spinster without a worry under heaven but her suspicious nature and her hair falling out. And then to be treated the way I am by that girl! It'd make a saint waxy, so it would . . . Good heavens! can't you come in, or are you deaf or lame or what?" and in some exasperation she arose and went to the door. She looked in perplexity for one moment from her food to her visitor, but as good manners and a lady are never separate she welcomed and drew the young man inside—

"Come in, Mr. O'Grady," said she. "How are you now at all? Why, it's nearly a week since you were here. Your mother's well, I hope (sit down there now and rest yourself). Some people are always well, but I'm not—it's (sit there beside the window, like a good boy)—it's hard to have poor health and a crotchety husband, but we all have our trials. Is your father well too? But what's the use of asking; everyone's well but me. Did your aunt get the pot of jam I sent her last Tuesday? Raspberry is supposed to be good for the throat, but her throat's all right. Maybe she threw it out: I'm not blaming her if she did. God knows, she can buy jam, if she wants it, without being beholden to anyone for presents, and her husband in the Post Office. Well, well, well, I'm real glad to see you—and now, tell me all the news?"

The young man was a little embarrassed by this flood of language and its multiplicity of direction, but the interval gave him time to collect himself and get into the atmosphere. He replied—

"I don't think there is any news to tell, ma'm. Father and mother are quite well, thank you, and Aunt Jane got the jam all right, but she didn't eat it, because——"

"I knew she didn't," said Mrs. O'Reilly with pained humility, "we all have our troubles, and jam doesn't matter. Give her my love all the same, but maybe she doesn't want it either."

"You see," said the young man, "the children got at the jam before she could, and they cleaned the pot. Aunt Jane was very angry about it."

"Was she now?" said the instantly interested lady. "It's real bad for a stout person to be angry. Apoplexy or something might ensue, and death would be instantaneous, and cemeteries the price they are in Glasnevin and all: but the children shouldn't have eaten all the jam at once; it's bad for the stomach that way: still, God is good, and maybe they'll recover."

"They don't seem much the worse for it," said he, laughing at the thought; "they said it was fine jam."

"Well they might," replied his hostess, with suppressed indignation, "and raspberries eightpence the pound in Grafton Street, and the best preserving sugar twopence-three-farthings, and coal the way it is. Ah, no matter, God is good, and we can't live forever."

The four seconds of silence which followed was broken by the lover.

"Is Julia Elizabeth in, ma'm?" said he timidly.

"She's not, then," was the reply. "We all have our trials, Mr. O'Grady, and she's mine. I don't complain, but I don't deserve it, for a harder working woman never lived, but there you are."

"I'm rather glad she's out," said the youth hastily, "for I wanted to speak to yourself and your husband before I said anything to her."

Mrs. O'Reilly wheeled slowly to face him.

"Did you now?" said she, "and is it about Julia Elizabeth you came over? Well, well, well, just to think of it! But I guessed it long ago, when you bought the yellow boots. She's a real good girl, Mr. O'Grady. There's many and many's the young man, and they in good positions, mind you—but maybe you don't mean that at all. Is it a message from your Aunt Jane or your mother? Your Aunt Jane does send messages, God help her!"

"It's not, Mrs. O'Reilly: it's—if I may presume to say so—about myself."

"I knew it," was the rapid and enthusiastic reply. "She's a fine cook, Mr. O'Grady, and a head of hair that reaches down to her waist, and won prizes at school for composition. I'll call himself—he'll be delighted. He's in the next room making faces at a map. Maps are a terrible occupation, Mr. O'Grady; they spoil his eyesight and make him curse——"

She ambled to the door and called urgently—

"O'Reilly, here's young Mr. O'Grady wants to see you."

Her husband entered with a pen in his mouth and looked very severely at his visitor.

"What brought you around, young man?" said he.

The youth became very nervous. He stood up stammering—

"It's a delicate subject, sir," said he, "and I thought it would be only right to come to you first."

Here the lady broke in rapturously—

"Isn't it splendid, O'Reilly! You and me sitting here and growing old and contented, and this young gentleman talking to us the way he is. Doesn't it make you think of the song, 'John Anderson, my Jo, John'?"

Her husband turned a bewildered but savage eye on his spouse.

"It does not, ma'm," said he. "Well," he barked at Mr. O'Grady, "what do you want?"

"I want to speak about your daughter, sir."

"She's not a delicate subject."

"No indeed," said the wife. "Never a day's illness in her life except the measles, and they're wholesome when you're young, and an appetite worth cooking for, two eggs every morning and more if she got it."

Her husband turned on her with hands of frenzy——

"Oh——!" said he, and then to their visitor, "What have you to say about my daughter?"

"The fact is, sir," he stammered, "I'm in love with her."

"I see. You are the delicate subject. And what then?"

"And I want to marry her, sir."

"That's not delicacy, that's disease, young man. Have you spoken to Julia Elizabeth about this?"

"No, sir, I wanted first to obtain your and Mrs. O'Reilly's permission to approach her."

"And quite right, too," said the lady warmly. "Isn't it delightful," she continued, "to see a young, bashful youth telling of his love for our dear child? Doesn't it make you think of Moore's beautiful song, 'Love's Young Dream,' O'Reilly?"

"It does not," her husband snapped, "I never heard of the song, I tell you, and I never want to."

He turned again to the youth.

"If you are in earnest about this, you have my permission to court Julia Elizabeth as much as she'll let you. But don't blame me if she marries you. People who take risks must expect accidents. Don't go about lamenting that I hooked you in, or led you on, or anythink like that. I tell you, here and now, that she has a rotten temper——"

His wife was aghast.

"For shame, O'Reilly," said she.

HER HUSBAND CONTINUED, looking steadily at her.

"A rotten temper," said he; "she gives back answers."

"Never," was Mrs. O'Reilly's wild exclamation.

"She scratches like a cat," said her husband.

"It's a falsehood," cried the lady, almost in tears.

"She is obstinate, sulky, stubborn and cantankerous."

"A tissue," said his wife. "An absolute tissue," she repeated with the firmness which masks hysteria.

Her husband continued inexorably:

"She's a gadabout, a pavement-hopper, and when she has the toothache she curses like a carman. Now, young man, marry her if you like."

These extraordinary accusations were powerless against love and etiquette—the young man stood up: his voice rang——

"I will, sir," said he steadily, "and I'll be proud to be her husband."

In a frenzy of enthusiasm, Mrs. O'Reilly arose.

"Good boy," said she. "Tell your Aunt Jane I'll send her another pot of jam." She turned to her husband, "Isn't it delightful, O'Reilly; doesn't it make you think of the song, 'True, True Till Death'?"

Mr. O'Reilly replied grimly:

"It does not, ma'am. I'm going back to my work."

"Be a gentleman, O'Reilly," said his wife pleadingly. "Won't you offer Mr. O'Grady a bottle of stout or a drop of spirits?"

The youth intervened hastily, for it is well to hide one's vices from one's family.

"Oh, no, ma'm, not at all," said he, "I never drink intoxicating liquors."

"Splendid," said the beaming lady. "You're better without it. If you knew the happy homes it has ruined, and the things the clergy say about it, you'd be astonished. I only take it myself for the rheumatism, but I never did like it, did I, O'Reilly?"

"Never, ma'am," was his reply. "I only take it myself because my hearing is bad. Now, listen to me, young man. You want to marry Julia Elizabeth, and I'll be glad to see her married to a sensible, sober, industrious husband. When I spoke about her a minute ago I was only joking."

"I knew it all the time," said his wife. "Do you remember, Mr. O'Grady, I winked at you?"

"The girl is a good girl," said her husband, "and well brought up."

"Yes," said his wife, "her hair reaches down to her waist, and she won a prize for composition—*Jessica's First Prayer*, all about a girl with——"

Mr. O'Reilly continued:

"She brings me up a cup of tea every morning before I get up."

"She never wore spectacles in her life," said Mrs. O'Reilly, "and she got a prize for freehand drawing."

"She did so," said Mr. O'Reilly.

His wife continued——

"*The Schoolboy Baronet* it was; all about a young man that broke his leg down a coal mine, and it never got well again until he met the girl of his heart."

"Tell me," said Mr. O'Reilly, "how are you young people going to live, and where?"

His wife interpolated.

"Your Aunt Jane told me that you had seventeen shillings and sixpence a week. Take my advice and live on the south side—two rooms easily, and most salubrious."

The young man coughed guardedly, he had received a rise of wages since that information passed, but candour belongs to childhood, and one must live these frailties down.

"Seventeen and six isn't very much, of course," said he, "but I am young and strong——"

"It's more than I had," said his host, "when I was your age. Hello, there's the post!"

Mrs. O'Reilly went to the door and returned instantly with a letter in her hand. She presented it to her husband.

"It's addressed to you, O'Reilly," said she plaintively. "Maybe it's a bill; but God's good, and maybe it's a cheque."

Her husband nodded at the company and tore his letter open. He read it, and, at once as it appeared, he went mad, he raved, he stuttered, now slapping the letter with his forefinger and, anon, shaking his fist at his wife.

"Here's your daughter, ma'm," he stammered. "Here's your daughter, I say."

"Where?" cried the amazed lady. "What is it, O'Reilly?" She arose hastily and rolled towards him.

Mr. O'Reilly repelled her fiercely.

"A good riddance," he shouted.

"Tell me, O'Reilly, I command you," cried his wife.

"A minx, a jade," snarled the man.

"I insist," said she. I must be told. I'm not well, I tell you. My head's going round. Give me the letter."

Mr. O'Reilly drew about him a sudden and terrible calmness.

"Listen, woman," said he, "and you too, young man, and be thankful for your escape."

> "DEAR PA," he read, "this is to tell you that I got married today to Christie Rorke. We are going to open a little fried-fish shop near Amiens Street. Hoping this finds you as it leaves me at present, your loving daughter,
>
> "JULIA ELIZABETH.
>
> "*P. S.*—Give Christie's love to Ma."

Mrs. O'Reilly sank again to her chair. Her mouth was partly open. She breathed with difficulty. Her eyes were fixed on space, and she seemed to be communing with the guardians of Chaos.

"Married!" said she in a musing whisper. "Christie!" said she. She turned to her husband, "What an amazing thing. Doesn't it make you think, O'Reilly, of the poem, 'The World Recedes, It Disappears'?"

"It does not, ma'm," said her husband savagely.

"And what is this young gentleman going to do?" she continued, gazing tearfully at the suitor.

"He's going to go home," replied her husband fiercely. "He ought to be in bed long ago."

"A broken heart," said his wife, "is a sad companion to go home with. Doesn't it make you think of the song——?"

"It does not, ma'am," roared her husband. "I'm going back to my work," and once again the door banged and the room shook.

Young Mr. O'Grady arose timidly. The world was swimming about him. Love had deserted him, and etiquette was now his sole anchor; he shook hands with Mrs. O'Reilly.

"I think I had better be going now," said he. "Good-by, Mrs. O'Reilly."

"Must you really go?" said that lady with the smile of a maniac.

"I'm afraid so," and he moved towards the door.

"Well," said she, "give my love to your mother and your Aunt Jane."

"I will," was his reply, "and," with firm politeness, "thank you for a very pleasant evening."

"Don't mention it, Mr. O'Grady. Good-by."

Mrs. O'Reilly closed the door and walked back towards the table smiling madly. She sank into a chair. Her eye fell on the butter-knife.

"I haven't had a bit to eat this day," said she in a loud and threatening voice, and once against she pulled the loaf toward her.

II

HIS MOTHER finished reading the story of the Beautiful Princess, and it was surely the saddest story he had ever heard. He could not bear to think of that lovely and delicate lady all alone in the great, black forest waiting until the giant came back from killing her seven brothers. He would return with their seven heads swinging pitifully from his girdle, and, when he reached the castle gates, he would gnash his teeth through the keyhole with a noise like the grinding together of great rocks, and would poke his head through the fanlight of the door, and say: "fee-faw-fum" in a voice of such exceeding loudness that the castle would be shaken to its foundation.

Thinking of this made his throat grow painful with emotion, and then his heart swelled to the most uncomfortable dimensions, and he resolved to devote his whole life to the rescue of the Princess, and, if necessary, die in her defense.

Such was his impatience that he could not wait for anything more than his dinner, and this he ate so speedily that his father called him a Perfect Young Glutton, and a Disgrace to Any Table. He bore these insults in a meek and heroic spirit, whereupon his mother said that he must be ill, and it was only by a violent and sustained outcry that he escaped being sent to bed.

Immediately after dinner he set out in search of the giant's castle. Now there is scarcely anything in the world more difficult to find than a giant's castle, for it is so large that one can only see it through the wrong end of a telescope; and, furthermore, he did not even know this giant's name. He might never have found the place if he had not met a certain old woman on the common.

She was a very nice old woman. She had three teeth, a red shawl, and an umbrella with groceries inside it; so he told her of the difficulty he was in.

SHE REPLIED THAT he was in luck's way, and that she was the only person in the world who could assist him. She said her name was Really and Truly, and that she had a magic head, and that if he cut her head off it would answer any questions he asked it. So he stropped his penknife on his boot, and said he was ready if she was.

The old woman then informed him that in all affairs of this delicate nature it was customary to take the will for the deed, and that he might now ask her head anything he wanted to know—so he asked the head what was the way to the nearest giant, and the head replied that if he took the first turning to the left, the second to the right, and then the first to the left again, and if he then knocked at the fifth door on the right-hand side, he would see the giant.

He thanked the old woman very much for the use of her head, and she permitted him to lend her one threepenny piece, one pocket handkerchief, one gun-metal watch, one cap, and one boot-lace. She said that she never took two of anything, because that was not fair, and that she wanted these for a very particular, secret purpose, about which she dare not speak, and, as to which she trusted he would not press her, and then she took a most affectionate leave of him and went away.

He followed her directions with the utmost fidelity, and soon found himself opposite a house which, to the eyes of anyone over seven years of age, looked very like any other house, but which, to the searching eye of six and three quarters, was patently and palpably a giant's castle.

He tried the door, but it was locked, as, indeed, he had expected it would be. Then he crept very cautiously, and peeped through the first floor window. He could see in quite plainly. There was a polar bear crouching on the floor, and the head looked at him so directly and vindictively that if he had not been a hero he would have fled. The unexpected is always terrible, and when one goes forth to kill a giant it is unkind of Providence to complicate one's adventure with a gratuitous and wholly unnecessary polar bear. He was, however, reassured by the sight of a heavy chair standing on the polar bear's stomach, and in the chair there sat the most beautiful woman in the world.

An ordinary person would not have understood so instantly that she was the most beautiful woman in the world, because she looked very stout, and much older than is customary with princesses—but that was owing to the fact that she was under an enchantment, and she would become quite young again when the giant was slain and three drops of his blood had been sprinkled on her brow.

She was leaning forward in the chair, staring into the fire, and she was so motionless that it was quite plain she must be under an enchantment. From the very first instant he saw the princess he loved her, and his heart swelled with pity to think that so beautiful a damsel should be subjected to the tyranny of a giant. These twin passions of pity and love grew to so furious a strength within him that he could no longer contain himself. He wept in a loud and very sudden voice which lifted the damsel out of her enchantment and her chair, and hurled her across the room as though she had been propelled by a powerful spring.

HE WAS SO OVERJOYED at seeing her move that he pressed his face against the glass and wept with great strength, and, in a few moments, the princess came timidly to the window and looked out. She looked right over his head at first, and then she looked down and saw him, and her eyebrows went far up on her forehead, and her mouth opened; and so he knew that she was delighted to see him. He nodded to give her courage, and shouted three times, "Open Sesame, Open Sesame, Open Sesame," and then she opened the window and he climbed in.

The princess tried to push him out again, but she was not able, and he bade her put all her jewels in the heel of her boot and fly with him. But she was evidently the victim of a very powerful enchantment, for she struggled violently, and said incomprehensible things to him, such as "Is it a fire, or were you chased?" and "Where *is* the cook?" But after a little time she listened to the voice of reason, and recognized that these were legitimate and heroic embraces from which she could not honourably disentangle herself.

When her first transports of joy were somewhat abated she assured him that excessive haste had often undone great schemes, and that one should always look before one leaped, and that one should never be rescued all at once, but gradually, in order that one might become accustomed to the severe air of freedom —and he was overjoyed to find that she was as wise as she was beautiful.

He told her that he loved her dearly, and she admitted, after some persuasion, that she was not insensible to the charms of his heart and intellect, but she confessed that her love was given to another.

At these tidings his heart withered away within him, and when the princess admitted she loved the giant his amazement became profound and complicated. There was a rushing sound in his ears. The débris of his well-known world was crashing about him, and he was staring upon a new planet, the name of which was Incredulity. He looked round with a queer feeling of insecurity. At any moment the floor might stand up on one of its corners, or the walls might begin to flap and waggle. But none of these things happened. Before him sat the princess in an attitude of deep dejection, and her lily-white hands rested helplessly on her lap. She told him in a voice that trembled that she would have married him if he had asked her ten years earlier, and urged that she could not fly with him now, because, in the first place, she had six children, and, in the second place, it would be against the law, and, in the third place, his mother might object. She admitted that she was unworthy of his love, and that she should have waited, and she bore his reproaches with a meekness which finally disarmed him.

He stropped his penknife on his boot, and said that there was nothing left but to kill the giant, and that she had better leave the room while he did so, because it would not be a sight for a weak woman, and he wondered audibly how much hasty-pudding would fall out of the giant if he stabbed him right to the heart. The princess begged him not to kill her husband, and assured him that this giant had not got any hasty-pudding in his heart at all, and that he was really the nicest giant that ever lived, and, further, that he had not killed her seven brothers, but the seven brothers of quite another person entirely, which was only a reasonable thing to do when one looked at it properly, and she continued in a strain which proved to him that this unnatural woman really loved the giant.

It was more in pity than in anger that he recognized the impossibility of rescuing this person. He saw at last that she was unworthy of being rescued, and told her so. He said bitterly that he had grave doubts of her being a princess at all, and that if she was married to a giant it was no more than she deserved, and further he had a good mind to rescue the giant from her, and he would so in a minute, only that it was against his principles to rescue giants. And, saying so, he placed his penknife between his teeth and climbed out through the window again.

He stood for a moment outside the window with his right hand extended to the sky and the moonlight blazing on his penknife—a truly formidable figure, and one which the princess never forgot; and then he walked slowly away, hiding behind a cold and impassive demeanour a mind that was tortured and a heart that had plumbed most of the depths of human suffering.

III

ALOYSIUS MURPHY went a-courting when the woods were green. There were grapes in the air and birds in the river. A voice and a song went everywhere, and the voice said, "Where is my beloved?" and the song replied, "Thy beloved is awaiting thee, and she stretches her hands abroad and laughs for thy coming; bind then the feather of a bird to thy heel and a red rose upon thy hair, and go quickly."

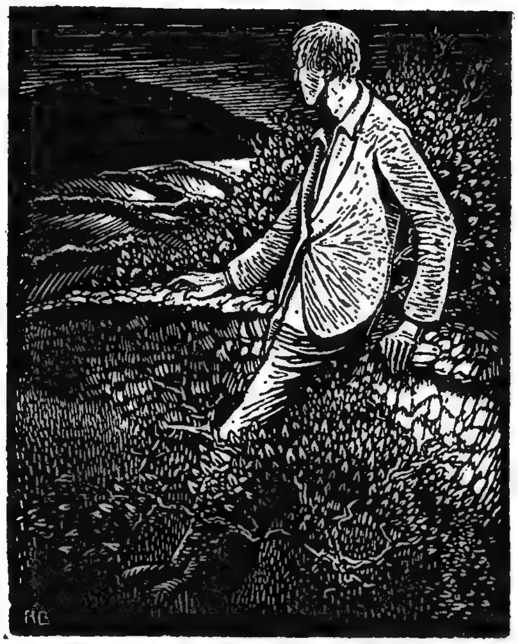
So he took his hat from behind the door and his stick from beside the bed and went out into the evening.

He had been engaged to Miss Nora MacMahon for two ecstatic months, and held the opinion that the earth and the heavens were aware of the intensity of his passion, and applauded the unique justice of his choice.

By day he sat humbly in a solicitor's office, or scurried through the thousand offices of the Four Courts, but with night came freedom, and he felt himself to be of the kindred of the gods, and marched in pomp.

By what subterranean workings had he become familiar with the lady? Suffice it that the impossible is possible to a lover. Everything can be achieved in time. The man who wishes to put a mountain in his pocket can do so if his pocket and his wish be of the requisite magnitude.

Now the lady toward whom the raging torrent of his affections had been directed was the daughter of his employer, and this, while it notated romance, pointed also to tragedy. Further, while this fact was well within his knowledge, it was far from the cognizance of the lady. He would have enlightened her on the point, but the longer he delayed the revelation, the more difficult did it become. Perpetually his tongue ached to utter the truth. When he might be squeezing her hand or plunging his glance into the depths of her eyes, consciousness would touch him on the shoulder with a bony hand and say, "That is the boss's daughter you are hugging"—a reminder which was provocative sometimes of an almost unholy delight, when to sing and dance and go mad was but natural; but at other times it brought with it moods of woe, abysses of blackness.



In the solitude of the room wherein he lodged he sometimes indulged in a small drama, wherein, as the hero, he would smile a slightly sad and quizzical smile, and say gently, "Child, you are Mr. MacMahon's daughter; I am but his clerk"—here the smile became more sadly quizzical—"how can I ask you to forsake the luxury of a residence in Clontarf for the uncongenial, nay, bleak surroundings of a South Circular Road habitation?" And she, ah me! She vowed that a hut and a crust and the love of her heart . . . ! No matter!

So, nightly, Aloysius Murphy took the tram to Clontarf, and there, wide-coated and sombreroed like a medieval conspirator, he trod delicately beside his cloaked and hooded inamorata, whispering of the spice of the wind and the great stretches of the sea.

Now, a lover who comes with the shades of night, harbinger of the moon, and hand in glove with the stars, must be a very romantic person indeed, and, even if he is not, a lady whose years are tender can easily supply the necessary gauze to tone down his too-rigorous projections. But the bird that flies by night must adduce for our curiosity substantial reason why his flight has deserted the whiteness of the daytime; else we may be tempted to believe that his advent in darkness is thus shrouded for even duskier purposes. Miss MacMahon had begun to inquire who Mr. Murphy was, and he had, accordingly, begun to explain who he was not. This explanation had wrapped his identity in the most labyrinthine mystery, but Miss MacMahon detected in the incomprehensible, rapid fluctuations of his story a heart torn by unmerited misfortune, and whose agony could only be alleviated by laying her own dear head against its turmoil.

To a young girl a confidant is almost as necessary as a lover, and when the rendezvous is clandestine, the youth mysterious, and his hat broad-leafed and flapping, then the necessity for a confidant becomes imperative indeed.

Miss MacMahon confided the knowledge of all her happiness to the thrilled ear of her younger sister, who at once hugged her, and bubbled query, conjecture, and admonishment. " . . . Long or short? . . . Dark or fair?" " . . . and slender . . . with eyes . . . dove . . . lightning . . . hair . . . and so gentle . . . and then I said . . . and then he said . . . !" "Oh, sweet!" sighed the younger sister, and she stretched her arms wide and crushed the absent excellences of Mr. Murphy to her youthful breast.

On returning next day from church, having listened awe-stricken to a sermon on filial obedience, the little sister bound her mother to secrecy, told the story, and said she wished she were dead. Subsequently the father of Clann MacMahon was informed, and he said "Hum" and "Ha," and rolled a fierce, hard eye, and many times during the progress of the narrative he interjected with furious energy these words, "Don't be a fool, Jane," and Mrs. MacMahon responded meekly, "Yes, dear," and Mr. MacMahon then said "Hum" and "Ha" and "Gr-r-r-up" in a truly terrible and ogreish manner; and in her distant chamber Miss MacMahon heard the reverberation of that sonorous grunt, and whispered to her little sister, "Pa's in a wax," and the little sister pretended to be asleep.

The spectacle of an elderly gentleman, side-whiskered, precise and gray, disguising himself with mufflers and a squash hat, and stalking with sombre fortitude the erratic wanderings of a pair of young featherheads, is one which mirth may be pleased to linger upon. Such a spectacle was now to be observed in the semi-rural outskirts of Clontarf. Mr. MacMahon tracked his daughter with considerable stealth, adopting unconsciously the elongated and nervous stride of a theatrical villain. He saw her meet a young man wearing a broad-brimmed hat, whose clothing was mysteriously theatrical, and whose general shape, when it could be glimpsed, was oddly familiar.

"I have seen that fellow somewhere," said he.

The lovers met and kissed, and the glaring father spoke rapidly but softly to himself for a few moments. He was not accustomed to walking, and it appeared as if these two intended to walk forever, but he kept them in sight, and when the time came for parting he was close at hand.

The parting was prolonged, and renewed, and rehearsed again with amendments and additions: he could not have believed that saying good-by to a person could be turned into so complicated and symbolic a ceremony: but, at last, his daughter, with many a backward look and wave of hand, departed in one direction, and the gentleman, after similar signals, moved toward the tramway.

"I know that fellow, whoever he is," said Mr. MacMahon.

Passing a lamp-post, Mr. Aloysius Murphy stayed for a moment to light his pipe, and Mr. MacMahon stared, he ground his teeth, he foamed at the mouth, and his already prominent eyes bulged still further and rounder.

"Well, I'm——!" said he.

He turned and walked homeward slowly, murmuring often to himself and to the night, "All right! wait, though! Hum! Ha! Gr-r-r-up!"

That night he repeatedly entreated his wife "not to be a fool, Jane," and she as repeatedly replied, "Yes, dear." Long after midnight he awoke her by roaring violently from the very interior depths of a dream, "Cheek of the fellow! Pup! Gr-r-r-up!"

At breakfast on the following morning he suggested to his wife and elder daughter that they should visit his office later on in the day——

"You have never seen it, Nora," said he, "and you ought to have a look at the den where your poor old daddy spends his time grinding dress material for his family from the faces of the poor. I've got some funny clerks, too: one of them is a curiosity." Here, growing suddenly furious, he gave an egg a clout.

His daughter giggled——

"Oh, Pa," said she, "you are not breaking that egg, you are murdering it."

He looked at her gloomily——

"It wasn't the egg I was hitting," said he. "Gr-r-r-up," said he suddenly, and he stabbed a piece of butter, squashed it to death on a slice of bread, and tore it to pieces with his teeth.

THE YOUNG LADY LOOKED at him with some amazement, but she said nothing, for she believed, as most ladies do, that men are a little mad sometimes, and are foolish always.

Her father intercepted that glance, and instantly snarled:

"Can you cook, young woman?" said he.

"Of course, father," replied the perplexed maiden.

He laid aside his spoon and gave her his full attention.

"Can you cook potatoes?" said he. "Can you mash 'em, eh? Can you mash 'em? What! You can. They call them Murphies in this country, girl. Can you mash Murphys, eh? I can. There's a Murphy I know, and, although it's been mashed already, by the Lord Harry, I'll mash it again. Did you ever know that potatoes had eyes, miss? Did you ever notice it when you were cooking them? Did you ever look into the eyes of a Murphy, eh? When you mashed it, what? Don't answer me, girl."

"I don't know what you are talking about, Pa," said the young lady.

"Don't you, now?" grinned the furious gentleman, and his bulging eyes looked like little round balls of glass. "Who said you did, miss? Gr-r-r-up," said he, and the poor girl jumped as though she had been prodded with a pin.

MR. ALOYSIUS MURPHY'S activities began at ten o'clock in the morning by opening the office letters with an ivory instrument and handing them to his employer; then, as each letter was read, he entered its receipt and date in a book kept for that purpose.

When Mr. MacMahon came in on the morning following the occurrences I have detailed, he neglected, for the first time in many years, to respond to his clerk's respectfully-cordial salutation. To the discreet "Good morning, sir," he vouchsafed no reply. Mr. Murphy was a trifle indignant and a good deal perturbed, for to an unquiet conscience a word or the lack of it is a goad. Once or twice, looking up from his book, he discovered his employer's hard eyes fixed upon him with a regard too particular to be pleasant.

An employer seldom does more than glance at his clerk, just the sideward glint of a look which remarks his presence without admitting his necessity, and in return the clerk slants a hurried eye on his employer, notes swiftly if his aspect be sulky or benign, and stays his vision at that. But now Mr. Murphy, with sudden trepidation, with a frightful sinking in the pit of his stomach, became aware that his employer was looking at him stealthily; and, little by little, he took to sneaking glances at his employer. After a few moments neither seemed to be able to keep his eyes from straying—they created opportunities in connection with the letters; the one looking intent, wide-eyed, and with a cold, frigid, rigid, hard stare, and the other scurrying and furtive, in-and-away, hit-and-miss-and-try again, wink, blink, and twitter.

Mr. MacMahon spoke.

"Murphy!"

"Yes, sir."

"Have you anything in court today?"

"Yes, sir, an ex parte application, Donald and Cluggs."

"Let O'Neill attend to it. I shall want you to draft a deed for some ladies who will call here at noon. You can come down at ten minutes after twelve."

"Yes, sir," said Murphy.

He grabbed his share of the letters and got to the door bathed in perspiration and forebodings. He closed the door softly behind him, and stood for a few seconds staring at the handle. "Blow you!" said he viciously to nothing in particular, and he went slowly upstairs.

"He can't know," said he on the first landing. On the second floor he thought, "She couldn't have told, for she didn't know herself." He reached his desk. "I wish I had a half of whisky," said the young man to himself.

Before twelve o'clock arrived, however, he had journeyed on the hopeful pinions of youth from the dogmatic "could not be" to the equally immovable "is not," and his mind resumed its interrupted equilibrium.

At twelve o'clock Mrs. and Miss MacMahon arrived, and were at once shown into the private office.

At ten minutes past, Mr. Murphy's respectful tap was heard. "Don't, Eddie," said Mrs. MacMahon in a queer, flurried voice. "Come in," said her husband. Nora was examining some judicial cartoons pinned over the mantelpiece. Mr. Murphy opened the door a few inches, slid through the aperture, and was at once caught and held by his employer's eye, which, like a hand, guided him to the table with his note-book. Under the almost physical pressure of that authoritative glare he did not dare to look who was in the room, but the rim of his eye saw the movement of a skirt like the far-away, shadowy canter of a ghost's robe. He fixed his attention on his note-book.

Mr. MacMahon began to dictate a Deed of Conveyance from a precedent deed in his hand. After dictating for some few minutes——

"Murphy," said he, and at the word the young lady studying the cartoons stiffened, "I've rather lost the thread of that clause; please read what you have down."

Murphy began to read, and, at the first word, the girl made a tiny, shrill sort of a small mouse's noise, and then stood stock-still, tightened up and frightened, with her two wild eyes trying to peep around her ears.

Mr. Murphy heard the noise and faltered—he knew instinctively. Something told him, with the bellowing assurance of a cannon, who was there. He must look. He forced his slack face past the granite image that was his employer, saw a serge-clad figure, that he knew, one ear and the curve of a cheek. Then a cascade broke inside his head. It buzzed and chattered and crashed, with now and again the blank brutality of thunder bashing through the noise. The serge-clad figure swelled suddenly to a tremendous magnitude, and then it receded just as swiftly, and the vast earth spun minutely on a pin's point ten million miles away, and she was behind it, her eyes piercing with scorn. . . . Through the furious winds that whirled about his brain he heard a whisper, thin and cold, and insistent as a razor's edge, "Go on, Murphy; go on, Murphy." He strove to fix his attention on his shorthand notes—to fight it down, to stand the shock like a man, and then crawl into a hole somewhere and die; but his mind would not grip, nor would his eyes focus.

The only words which his empty brain could pump up were these, irrelevant and idiotic, "'A frog he would a-wooing go, heigho,' said Rowley"; and they must not be said. "It is a bit difficult, perhaps," said the whispering voice that crept through the tumult of winds and waters in his head. "Never mind, take down the rest of it," and the faraway whisper began to say things all about nothing, making queer little noises and pauses, running for a moment into a ripple of sound, and eddying and dying away and coming back again—buz-z-z! His note-book lying on the table was as small as a postage stamp, a very indistinct one, while the pencil in his hand was as big as an elephant's leg. How can a man write on a microscopic blur with the stump of a fir tree? He poked and prodded, and Mr. MacMahon watched for a few moments his clerk poking his note-book with the wrong end of a pencil. He silently pulled his daughter forward and made her look. After a little——

"That will do, Murphy," said he, and Mr. Murphy, before he got out, made two severe attempts to walk through a wall.

For half an hour he sat at his desk in a trance, with his eyes fixed upon an ink-bottle. At last, nodding his head slowly——

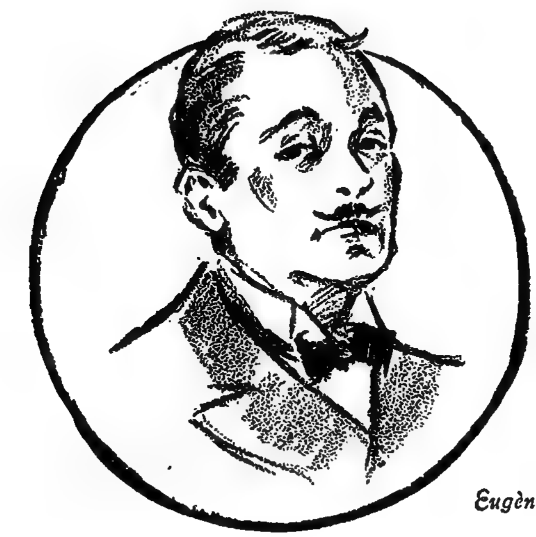
"I'll bet you a shilling," said he to the ink-bottle, "that I get the sack tonight." The ink-bottle lost the wager.

To a Post Office Inkwell

By Christopher Morley

How many humble hearts have dipped
In you, and scrawled their manuscript!
Have shared their secrets, told their cares,
Their curious and quaint affairs!

Your pool of ink, your scratchy pen,
Have moved the lives of unborn men,
And watched young people, breathing hard,
Put Heaven on a postal card.



Eugène

Lion's Courage

I

FRESH FROM THE NEAREST approach to a bath that he ever allowed himself, Monsieur Eugène Danou pulled his woolen undervest, still warm from a recent night's use, again over his head, stretched toward the foot of the bed where hung his trousers, and so progressed from stage to stage, until his mirror and an habitual feeling of correctness indicated the practical completion of a careful and unhurried toilet.

He then shook a little brilliantine into his hand, rubbed the palms together, and devoted two minutes to the violent friction of his rather scanty graying hair. This done, he plied comb and brush with care, flicked a suspicion of dandruff from the shoulders of his shiny black coat, and, striding across the small bedroom, flung open the casement window.

The freshness of a bright May morning in this pleasant suburb of Paris had its effect on the impressionable little commercial traveler, and his rising spirits found outlet in a gay snatch of tune. He accepted his unaccustomed cheerfulness as a favourable omen, and stood for a little, breathing the fine air and watching the approaching paper-boy follow a leisurely and erratic course along the street.

For the first time in his twenty years' experience of the road, M. Danou was without a situation. Nor was he suffering for any fault of his own. When it came to selling gentlemen's hats, it was admitted that, despite a vague timidity of manner (the peeping skeleton in an otherwise perfect cupboard), the quiet little hard-working traveler was without a rival. His employers, expert character readers, had hesitated before promoting him to the position of head salesman; but a fuller sense of his own importance seemed to fill M. Danou from that moment, and they never had reason to regret their decision. In his selling, indeed, appeared occasional flashes of brilliance. He took daring chances for his firm, and was consistently successful; more than once he displayed a boldness that astonished his rivals.

"Success has been the making of our little Danou," his fellow travelers would whisper behind their hands of an evening in the small-town commercial hotels: "Since he has become chief *représentant* for Monod Frères he is bold as a lion."

And Danou, whose hearing was good, caught the sense of these remarks in his corner before the fire, and swelled inwardly with gratification.

"The lion's boldness is bluff; he is a coward at heart," muttered an old man once on the opposite side of the chimney. His words were, however, lost in the general noise of the talk, and M. Danou retired early, the compliment still ringing in his ears. During the night, suggestion did its work, and when he awoke, the lion was bolder than before.

One day a friend sat in a railway carriage listening to M. Danou's tale of a recent daring *coup*. "And what would have happened had you been unsuccessful?" queried the friend.

"My firm would have lost some fifty thousand francs," replied their *représentant*, not without pride.

"And you—would you have lost your situation?"

M. Danou thought for a moment; then he gave a little shrug. "It is a thing I have not considered," he replied briefly, and changed the subject.

A chance question in a railway carriage——

Maria, his wife, noticed the change within five minutes of his home-coming the following Friday. She was almost the only person who realized his weakness, and it had been her especial care for years to watch over him, lending him her strength when he required it. From this day forward she redoubled her efforts.

Learning by a few keen questions the reason of his sudden *malaise*, she at once set about her task of reassuring him. She dwelt upon his great experience, his wonderful successes. She argued with the skill of a lawyer, the conviction of a fanatic, the intensity of her love. She named him half a dozen firms who would jump at the chance of his services should the occasion arise, and eventually she succeeded—succeeded, that is, in restoring his self-confidence as a salesman. What might lie beyond, it was fortunately unnecessary for her to consider.

When M. Danou returned home one gray evening in March, he brought the news that MM. Lefèvre et Cie., of Nancy, one of the most important hat-making establishments in France, had closed its doors. Maria watched him carefully as he sat after supper smoking before the fire. The serving-girl had washed up the dishes and gone home. It was an hour when they generally talked together of the day's happenings, or,

Drawings by
Ruth King

By
G. B. MACKENZIE

G. B. Mackenzie.

if M. Danou had been away, gave one another a survey of their week's events.

This evening he was unusually silent, and when it came to nine o'clock, rose and fetched his boots. "I think I'll go along as far as the station," he remarked; "the late paper ought to be in by now."

There was only a short paragraph about the failure. As they already knew, it was due to the slump following the war boom, coupled with reviving competition from abroad. M. Danou took a serious view of the situation. "There will be more to follow," he prophesied, shaking his head; and for once all Maria's efforts to reassure him were unsuccessful. That night they both went to bed depressed: a fortnight later the old-established firm of Monod Frères discharged its three hundred employes, and followed its rival into liquidation.

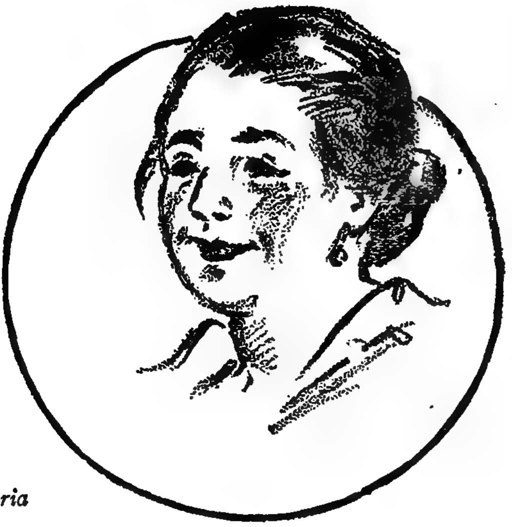
In face of this unparalleled situation, M. Danou went almost to pieces. The nightmare of his life had become a reality; for with every firm in France cutting down staffs and reducing expenditure, the chance of finding employment for months, and possibly years to come, appeared hopeless.

"How," he kept asking, "can a man, already past middle age and with his knowledge and experience so specialized, adopt any other line of business than his own?"

As for traveling salesmen—they were clamouring for work by the hundred in the columns of every newspaper he took up; and as day followed unsuccessful day, and he trailed home in the evening, weary and hopeless from his fruitless seeking, even Maria at last began to look grave.

During the first week it had been bearable. When she met him at the station, as she made a point of doing when she knew the hour of his train, he would smile and joke, and ask her how she liked being among the unemployed. The knowledge that they would not immediately starve was a comfort for which he learned to thank Our Lady with greater fervency every day; and the few hundred francs a month which the revenue of his wife's untouched *dot* assured them certainly kept him from a premature despair. But there was hardly more than would keep body and soul together, and the need for finding a situation grew daily more pressing.

During the second week of unemployment, he ceased to joke; at the end of the second month, he was wallowing in gloom. *"Je ne suis bon à rien,"* he would mutter over and over to himself while she was washing up the supper things; "I am good for nothing; nobody wants me; it is finished."



Maria

When the dishes were dry and piled in place in the old-fashioned buffet, she would draw her chair close to his and take his hand; and while she stroked it like a child's, little by little her influence would gain upon him. Generally she let him do the talking first; then, when he was wearied, she had her turn, sympathizing, reassuring, comforting. They spoke of old times, of his long and successful career, and a hundred little triumphs.

Then, with a bravery he never imagined, she turned to the future; and as she talked, he caught the spirit of her optimism. And there was a future for them yet—she knew it, if only her work of years would bear the test. She strove as never before to save what still remained as the fruit of her labours; and each night, when bedtime came, she found her Eugène again grown almost cheerful. But her triumphs were, as a rule, pitifully short-lived. His self-confidence had a habit of draining away in the night, and he would awake each morning, despite her, to the hopeless darkness of the day before.

II

This morning was a notable exception. Could it be the swallows, swaying and chirruping on the telephone wires, or that cheery rascal of a paper-boy whistling his careless way out of sight? M. Danou's own little song changed to a whistle as he turned to wish his wife good morning; such sleepy interchange of words as might take place on their awakening was never considered in the nature of a formal greeting.

His beloved Maria, short and well-covered, entered smiling from the kitchen. She seemed indifferent to the dirtiness of her yellow dressing-gown, and the numerous strands of chestnut hair that straggled untidily over her ample forehead. She would have cared as little had she realized the greasy smudge disfiguring an otherwise rosy cheek; for, although Parisian-born

—or perhaps because of it—she considered that nothing should be allowed to interfere with the work to be done. Later, she would dress and powder with the best; but that would be in the afternoon, when the house was dusted and the remains of her midday meal had disappeared. In the morning she had more important things in hand.

"The newspaper, Eugène! Say now, there will perhaps be something today. But you must read it while you are drinking your chocolate: if we do not take our breakfast at once, I shall never have the time to go along to the market."

M. Danou, his favourite *Petit Parisien* in his hand, followed his wife into the small kitchen, where two cups of chocolate were already cooling, set out on a piece of oilcloth at one end of the table. Maria produced the long loaf of crusty bread left by the baker's boy an hour before, and with neither butter nor jam to colour the meal, they began to eat.

DISREGARDING THE NEWS, the little man munched and drank in silence, while his eyes were running with the speed of custom from one likely advertisement to another. The "Situations Vacant" column was not a long one that morning in the *Petit Parisien,* and he was nearing the bottom of a seemingly hopeless list, when——

Suddenly the honest little man's heart missed a beat. *Enfin!* There it was at last! But was it? He must make certain— Yes, indeed——

M. Danou forgot his very first rule of good society: "Maiah! Maiah—oo!" he exploded in the middle of an enormous mouthful of crusty bread. A gulp of chocolate helped to render him coherent: then in an excited voice, a trembling finger to guide him, he read off his find.

"Voilà, Maria! There is my affair! Who would have thought to discover it today? and in the *journal?* Ah, and we have searched so long! I know the Maison Barthélmy in the Boulevard de Nîmes: they are a serious firm, who pay well their employes. M. Barthélmy, the principal, is a shrewd man, but bears a good reputation. If only I can manage to arrive before it is too late——"

"But it is perfect!" His wife had risen, and now leaned over the table by his side, her arm through his, to read the magic words.

" 'Head traveler . . . push the sale of gentlemen's hats.' It's exactly what you're waiting for, dearest, isn't it? But, Eugène—why do they put 'only those with absolute confidence in themselves need apply'? I don't think I quite like that: it sounds so—so funny."

"Not at all, darling—quite essential." His words came hastily in jerks, between mouthfuls. "Confidence? We travelers have to have confidence, of course—never get on without— Absolute self-confidence—that's the secret— Often have to make important decisions—might be question of a hundred thousand francs one day. Thank God, at least I've never suffered from nerves."

And a moment after, "For goodness' sake, hurry up with these boots, Maria; I know you're going to make me miss my train."

An hour later a little man, neatly but quietly dressed, entered M. Barthélmy's private office on the Boulevard de Nîmes. Behind the counter a girl sat, typing. She glanced at his card. "If you've come about the advertisement," she said, "M. Barthélmy can't see you till four o'clock."

"My business is with your employer, mademoiselle, and not with you. Will you kindly tell him I am here?"

"Is it about the advertisement?"

M. Danou interested himself in a calendar on the wall, and made no reply.

With an angry glance that was entirely wasted upon him, the girl rose from her chair and pushed open a heavy door in the rear of the office. Hardly had she disappeared, before M. Danou had taken four swift strides round the counter. The inner-office door was not yet closed when it was opening again before him.

"Didn't he tell you his business?" The short wiry man with the pointed gray beard and searching eyes was tapping his desk irritably with the corner of M. Danou's card. He swung round sharply at the interruption.

"And what do you mean, monsieur, by coming in here without my permission?"

Briefly, M. Danou explained his visit. "My twenty years' experience on the road," he added, "has taught me to walk straight in when occasion demands. It has also taught me to arrive before the crowd. If I have annoyed you, I demand your pardon; but you see my business methods in operation—and at least you will hardly deny that I am here."

He took out a coloured handkerchief and mopped his brow. The first round was his; had M. Barthélmy decided to turn him into the street without consideration, he would not continue to sit and study him as he was doing. This little success gave him just the fillip he required. The whole world seemed now at his feet if only he conducted himself carefully, and he found himself thinking back with amazement upon his recent long periods of depression.

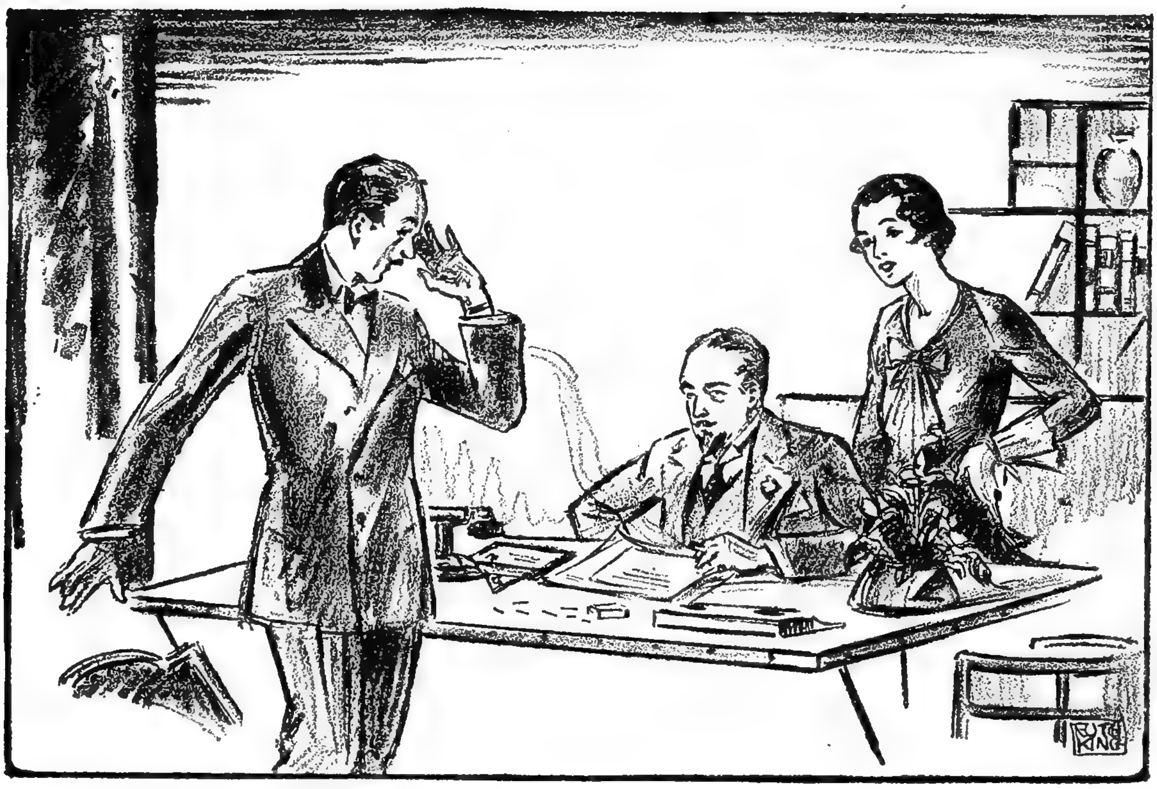
"Will you give yourself the trouble of sitting down?"

In the outer office began the tap-tap-tap of the young girl's typewriter; here, the atmosphere was different, and very peaceful. Double windows, tightly closed, cut off the noises of the busy boulevard; heavy curtains and other wall hangings seemed to deaden even the ticking of the large ormolu clock, set over the fireplace, below which a mass of glowing *boulets* sufficiently explained the oppressiveness of the atmosphere.

Although the furniture was a mixture of antique and modern, there was no suspicion of out-of-date-ness in the general effect; and if the principal of the firm himself appeared to belong to the preceding generation, it was only as long as he remained silent and absorbed. The penetration of his eyes and voice amazed M. Danou: they were almost sinister.

"Yes," resumed M. Barthélmy slowly after a few moments' scrutiny of the intruder, "yes, you are here. Do you smoke, monsieur? Accept a cigarette. And your credentials?"

Cursorily he glanced through the papers produced. He appeared more interested in observing the subject



With a sudden cry the little man was on his feet. His chair crashed to the floor.

of them sitting before him, and while M. Danou chose a cigarette and proceeded to light it, followed attentively his every gesture. He noted the careless flick of match on box, the moment's guarding of the flame, the sudden glow of the closely-packed tobacco. M. Danou smoked rapidly, inhaling sharply and blowing out the pale blue clouds one upon another in quick succession.

M. Barthélmy handed back the reference. "It is easy to light a cigarette when one uses the Swedish matches, monsieur," he observed.

The other took a couple of quick puffs. "My faith, yes; I have never known them to fail. A pipe is sometimes difficult in the wind, but a cigarette"—he waved his hand, "so simple!"

"Yes—it is largely a matter of confidence, is it not? You know how we all of us feel when we have but one match that remains. Remember the care with which we rub the tip—how easily the stem may break—how small a breath extinguishes the flame."

M. Danou glanced quickly at the speaker. "A salesman has little time for nerves, monsieur," he replied shortly.

"And you?"

"I flatter myself——" He jerked off the first long ash into the waste-paper basket, and sat back in his chair puzzled. He seemed to have lost, all of a sudden, the helm of this interview. Where, exactly, were they drifting?

M. Barthélmy remained silent.

"You have seen from my papers, monsieur, that as a salesman I have given satisfaction. Do I gather that the qualities you most demand are confidence and experience? And if that is so, is there any way in which I may satisfy you?"

He took three more quick pulls at his cigarette, but this time failed to displace the still-glowing ash.

M. Barthélmy cleared his throat. "As to your experience, I am satisfied. That you can fulfill my requirements, provided you have the necessary self-confidence, I have little doubt; but in this, my demands are above the average—and precise. I propose, with your agreement, to try a little experiment that has just occurred to me. It deals with just this point, and the result should be interesting. You permit?"

He placed his elbows on the desk, and allowed the tips of his thin, white fingers to rest lightly together.

M. Danou bowed.

"You will not, then, consider it an impertinence if I put to you rather a personal question." He paused. "You have, possibly—er—certain private moneys, monsieur? Savings, perhaps, on which you are living at present—a legacy from some dead relative?"

"There is my wife's *dot*," said M. Danou.

"Exactly! The only barrier between yourself and starvation—am I not right? the thing above all others that you fear to lose?"

The other nodded.

"You smoke quickly, Monsieur." M. Danou's cigarette was more than half consumed. "Is it because they are such simple things to light, that you smoke your cigarettes so quickly?"

M. Danou, utterly befogged, laughed nervously.

"This is my proposition." A harder note crept into M. Barthélmy's voice. He continued: "When you have finished this cigarette—no, no! smoke it to the end, I beg of you!—you will choose another, from my case or from your own, as you prefer. From your box you will select one match. If you succeed, monsieur, in lighting your cigarette with the single match, you will have this situation; and my terms, you will find, are generous."

He stopped. M. Danou waited a moment for him to continue; then, with a quick motion, threw his glowing stump into the fire, where it caught and burned up in a flash of yellow.

"Is that your only condition?" He had seized the first cigarette his fingers touched in the other man's case, and was already selecting a match.

"Not quite! You will remark that, if it were, you would have everything to gain by success, while in failing you would be losing nothing—nothing, that is, that belongs to you already. I can gauge a man's self-confidence by what he will stake on his success. By the way, I assume that you control this money of your wife's? Good! I make, then, this condition: you will give me your word of honour, in the presence of my typist, that, if you attempt my little experiment and fail, you will pay over to myself the full amount of your wife's *dot,* whatever that may be. That is my only condition. Have I made myself plain?"

He sat back, a little smile of irony twisting the pale lips, half-hidden by his mustache.

M. Danou deliberately laid down match and cigarette upon the desk. "If I fail——" he began slowly.

"And I happen to know that you will fail."

From outside, the muffled sounds of thronging traffic scarcely reached them. One huge vehicle, lumbering on its way, shook the glass in the windows and passed into the distance. Even from the chimneypiece the faint ticking of the clock was hardly audible while the two men eyed one another across the broad desk.

"You happen to know——"

"That you will fail."

A full minute passed while neither moved. Suddenly from within the clock came a sharp rattle. M. Danou jumped: "Fetch her in!" he snapped. He reached forward for the cigarette again, and as he examined it, his fingers were trembling.

The girl, summoned from her typing by the pressure of a button, quietly entered and stood by the door.

"Are you ready?"

The matches from the box were now scattered over the desk, and he was nervously examining each one.

"A moment, while I explain!"

In a few words M. Barthélmy had put the situation before his secretary. Wide-eyed, she nodded her understanding.

"And now," he continued turning to M. Danou, "you will give the required assurance to this lady and myself. Repeat these words: 'I promise——'"

M. Danou was choosing and rejecting match after match. His hands were shaking now so that he could scarcely pick them up. When he tried to speak, he made a husky sound in his throat, and had to swallow twice before he succeeded. "I promise——" he repeated, word after word to the end.

Another pause: the atmosphere itself seemed strung to breaking-point.

"All ready," said M. Barthélmy, leaning forward. Selecting one of the cigarettes himself, he picked up the match nearest to him—ignited it with a careless sweep on the side of the box. The next moment he was inhaling deeply.

For the space of several seconds M. Danou gazed at him, fascinated; then with a decisive movement forced his own cigarette between dry lips, grasped the box in his left hand, and snatched up a match. The safety-head was quivering on the striking surface: all he wanted was just to flick it along—only—to—flick—it—along—"But you will fail——"

It was like Maria's sob as the girl caught her breath.

With a sudden cry the little man was on his feet. Behind him, his chair crashed to the floor: match and box flew wildly toward the fire.

"Mon dieu! mon dieu! What am I doing? Maria! Maria!"

Next morning a charwoman, sweeping out an office in the Boulevard de Nîmes, discovered an unsmoked cigarette beneath the broad desk, where it must have rolled unnoticed. "It is well," she said, "my husband will be glad of this"; and she slipped it among the contents of her capacious pocket.

To Account Rendered

The authorities of an old church in Switzerland decided to make some repairs to its interior furnishings, and employed an artist to touch up a large painting. When the artist presented his bill, the Committee refused to pay it unless the details were specified. The bill was itemized:

	Francs
For correcting the Ten Commandments, embellishing Pontius Pilate, and putting new ribbons in his hat....	8
Putting tail on rooster of St. Peter and mending his comb	4
Repluming and gilding left wing of Guardian Angel......	6
Washing High Priest's servant........................	5
Renewing Heaven, adjusting the stars and cleaning up the moon..	7
Brightening up the flames of Hell, putting new tail on the Devil, mending his hoof, and doing several odd jobs for the damned	12
Touching up Purgatory and restoring lost souls..........	7
Mending the shirt of the Prodigal Son.................	3
	52

From
"St. Martin's Review."

By F. ANSTEY

The Game of Adverbs

A lithographic drawing by James C. Reid

Yours very Truly
Anstey Guthrie

PART I

Scene—*The Drawing-room at Dripstone Manor, a stately Jacobean mansion recently acquired by* Mr. Joseph Shuttleworth *(of Shuttleworth & Clack, Carpet Manufacturers, Yarnminster). It is toward dusk in early October.* Mrs. Shuttleworth, *a plump, good-humoured-looking matron of about fifty, is discovered with her children, viz.,* Grace, *a rather prim and precise young woman of twenty-three;* Flossie, *a pretty and lively girl of eighteen;* Connie, *twelve, and* Colin, *ten. With them are* Gillian Pinceney, *a high school friend of* Grace's; Ivy Goring, *a boarding-school chum of* Flossie's, *who are staying at the Manor; and the younger children's governess,* Miss Markham. Mr. Shuttleworth, *fifty-five, florid and prosperous-looking, enters with his son* Bob, *twenty-one, of Eton and Cambridge. Both are in shooting things.*

Mrs. Shuttleworth (*to them*)—So you're back at last! I've just sent away the tea. But if you'd like some, I could easily——

Mr. Shutt—Not for me, Louisa, thanks. Bob and I had something as we came through the dining-room. That Jack-o'-dandy friend of Bob's, Dormer, may like a cup, though, for all I can say.

Mrs. Shutt—But what's become of Mr. Dormer?

Mr. Shutt—Gone upstairs to titivate, I expect. Bless you, you wouldn't catch *him* coming in here in his shooting toggery!

Bob—Fact is, Mater, the Governor's rather riled with Dormer for saying on the way home that, on the whole, he thought the safest thing to be was a pheasant. Dormer didn't mean anything by it, Sir.

Mr. Shutt—It's my belief he did. And considering how confoundedly bad the light's been this afternoon, and that I never took to shooting at all till late in life, I don't call myself a *particularly* poor shot.

Bob (*sotto voce, to* Miss Goring)—Never knew any one who *did*. But the poor old Governor is rather apt to draw his bow at a venture.

Mrs. Shutt—I can't say I quite take to your friend Mr. Dormer, Bob. He has such a nasty, sneering way with him.

Grace—He's atrociously conceited. If he's a type of the Oxford undergraduate, I prefer Cambridge.

Flossie—I'm certain he's looking down on us secretly all the time.

Bob—What bosh! You don't understand old Dormer, that's all. He's a nailing good fellow. Capital company!

Mr. Shutt—You said he would keep us all amused if he could only be got to come. But so far, I can't say——

Bob—Well, Mater, after being at the same house at Eton with him, I *ought* to know. And all I can tell you is, that he was far away the best mimic I ever heard. He could imitate everybody and everything.

Flossie—Up to now he has only favoured us with an imitation of a disagreeable stuck-up pig. It's life-like—but still it is beginning to pall. (*She starts as* Dormer *lounges in; he has dressed for dinner, except that he is wearing a black smoking-coat.*) Oh, Mr. Dormer, you *did* startle me so! You look exactly like a curate.

Dormer—And are curates such alarming objects? But you're all in the dark here.

Flossie—Yes. We thought you would come in and be brilliant.

Dormer—I'm afraid I can't compete with the ordinary methods of illumination. *(To himself)* Wish this girl would see that I'm not in the humour for this sort of thing.

Mr. Shutt (*to himself*)—Can't do with this young fellow! *(Aloud, to his wife)* I'm off to my study, Louisa. Got some letters to write. *(He goes out.)*

Dormer *(to himself)*—On the sofa—with his eyes shut! Only wish I could slip out too—but they might think it rather casual. *(Aloud, to* Flossie*)* You haven't told me why you charged me with looking clerical. Can't say I feel complimented.

Flossie—Oh, it doesn't go any deeper than a buttoned-up coat and white tie. And you might have a worse compliment than being compared to a clergyman!

Mrs. Shutt—Talking of clergymen, my dear, that reminds me the Rector has never called yet. Why, we have been here for six weeks, and attended church regularly every Sunday morning, I do think he *might* have found time to return the civility before this!

DORMER—If it was the Rector I had the privilege to hear last Sunday, impressing upon us the duty of cheerfulness in sepulchral tones that were calculated to draw howls from a china poodle, I should be inclined to think myself that the gaiety of the party has not suffered appreciably from his delay.

MRS. SHUTT—Mr. Polyblank's pulpit manner is a little melancholy, certainly—he's a bachelor, poor man. But they tell me he's very much looked up to; comes of a very good family, and intimate with all the county folk, so perhaps he doesn't consider *us* good enough for him.

GRACE—Really, mamma, you talk as if we were pariahs! Most of the county people round here have called on us. What *does* it matter if Mr. Polyblank chooses to stay away?

MRS. SHUTT—All the same, my dear, there's a sort of natural tie between the Rectory and the Manor which—not that I'm one to force my acquaintance on anybody— Still, he might give us credit for not being downright savages, if we *do* come from Yarnminster!

FLOSSIE—There, mother dear, that's enough of the Reverend Poly. I vote we have a game at something. Are you fond of games, Mr. Dormer?

DORMER—Indoor games? Er—not immoderately. The mere fact of being supplied with a slip of paper and a stumpy pencil, and required to compile a list of animals beginning with A, paralyzes my faculties. I assure you I never can produce a single animal beginning with A.

FLOSSIE *(with intention)*—Not even *one?* But it's too dark to see to write. We might have a guessing game—where somebody has to go out of the room, you know.

DORMER—Ah, I think I could play at that.

FLOSSIE—And when you come back, you have to guess from our questions what celebrated historical person you're supposed to be.

DORMER—I should never get within a mile of it. I've forgotten my *Little Henry's History of England* ages ago.

MISS MARKHAM (*in a small, thin voice*)—There's a most amusing guessing game called "Adverbs."

DORMER—It sounds perfectly delightful. Only I'm afraid that I've only the sketchiest idea of what sort of thing an adverb *is*.

MISS MARKHAM—Surely you know *that!* It's a part of speech, formed by adding the termination "ly" to an adjective. For instance: bad—badly——

DORMER—Good—goodly. I see now, Miss Markham. Tremendous fun, I've no doubt.

MISS MARKHAM *(annoyed)*—I was about to explain how it's played. One of the party goes out, and the rest agree in what manner they are all to receive him when he returns—"admiringly," "affectionately," and so on.

DORMER—And he comes in pretending he's somebody else?

MISS MARKHAM—He can if he chooses, of course. But all he need do is to ask questions all around, and from the way in which they are answered he guesses what the adverb is. *Now* do you see, Mr. Dormer?

DORMER—I think I have grasped the idea. I don't mind volunteering to go out of the room, at all events.

GRACE—Very well. You go out, Mr. Dormer, and just wait about in the hall till we call you in.

DORMER—Delighted. *(To himself, as he goes out)* It's just possible I may be a little hard of hearing.

FLOSSIE (*after he has closed the door*)—Now, what adverb shall it be? Do let's make it something *difficult!*

MISS PINCENEY—Why not something which would let us show him what we think of him—"candidly"? "contemptuously"?

BOB—Oh, that would be rather rough on him, Miss Pinceney. I asked him down here, you know, and really——

MRS. SHUTT—Yes, my dear, it wouldn't be kind to make any visitor of ours uncomfortable, *would* it?

FLOSSIE—He makes *us* uncomfortable. He's as rude as ever he can be!

GRACE (*thoughtfully*)—Why not make the adverb "rudely"? We could be rude without being *personal.*

MRS. SHUTT—If you're sure he won't misunderstand——

BOB—Oh, *he'll* understand all right. After all, it's only a game. "Rudely" will do first-rate. I'll call him in.

IN THE ENTRANCE-HALL.

THE REV. PEREGRINE POLYBLANK (*at the glazed doors*)—I wonder if they heard me ring. (*He descries* DORMER *in the gloom.*) Ah, at last! He doesn't seem to see me—— Perhaps I'd better—— (*He goes in.*) Er—I am the Rector—Mr. Polyblank. Is Mrs. Shuttleworth at home, my good man?

DORMER (*stiffly*)—I've no doubt Mrs. Shuttleworth will be pleased to see you, Sir, if you wait a moment. (*To himself, as he passes on to the library*) Confounded cheek, taking me for the butler! But this will put that adverb foolery out of their heads, thank goodness. I shall get a nap in peace, now!

THE RECTOR (*alone, to himself*)—Painful to enter the old place again. I miss those poor dear Hardupps at every turn. To find strangers in the familiar rooms —it will be an ordeal, but I could not put it off any longer. . . . Why doesn't the butler return? Does this good lady mean to keep me here awaiting her pleasure? If these are manufacturing manners—— But I must beware of prejudice. No doubt there is some good reason for her delay. After all, people may have made a fortune out of carpets without being necessarily lacking in the refinements and courtesies of well-bred society.

BOB (*opening the drawing-room door*)—We're ready for you now, old chap. You can come in as soon as you like!

THE RECTOR (*to himself*)—"Old chap"! I "can come in"! . . . Well, well, I suppose this is the Yarnminster idea of cordiality. A little crude, perhaps—but well-meant. (*He enters the drawing-room.*)

PART II

SCENE—*The drawing-room at Dripstone.* THE RECTOR *has just entered, and stands helpless, trying* *to identify the mistress of the house in the deepening dusk.*

Bob (*cheerily*)—Make yourself at home, old fellow. Take a pew!

The Rector (*to himself*)—"Take a pew"! The heartiness of manufacturing circles is really rather trying! (*Aloud*) But excuse me, I don't yet see——

Bob (*taking him by the shoulders and thrusting him down on a couch in the centre of the circle*)—Squat there, and fire away.

The Rector—I—ah—don't know whether you are aware that my—um—ah—name is Polyblank, and that I am the Rector of Dripstone? (*A general ripple of genuine, if reluctant, amusement.*)

Bob—The Reverend Poly, eh? By Jove! Capital! All right, now begin asking questions—any rot will do, you know. Start with the Mater.

The Rector (*to himself*)—Are they *all* like this in Yarnminster? (*Aloud*) I confess that in this—ah—semi-darkness I find considerable difficulty in ascertaining the precise whereabouts of my—um—ah—hostess. (*An outburst of irrepressible laughter.*)

Mrs. Shutt (*giggling helplessly*)—Oh, dear, dear, I *oughtn't* to laugh—but he is so ridiculous! This is me, over here in the corner.

The Rector (*pitching his voice in that direction*)—I trust, my deah Mrs. Shuttleworth, that I have not seemed reprehensibly—ah—tardy in coming here to make your acquaintance?

Mrs. Shutt (*in a whisper*)—I don't know *what* to answer. (*Aloud*) Tardy? Oh, *dear,* no. I shouldn't have cared if you'd stayed away altogether. (*In a whisper, to* Grace) Do you think that was *too* rude, dear?

Grace—Oh, not at all, mamma. (*Aloud to* The Rector)—There, you've had mamma's answer. Now it's *my* turn.

The Rector (*to himself, in mild surprise*)—These people are really *too* impossible! (*Addressing himself to* Grace) May I plead in excuse that my delay is due (firstly) to the preparations for our Harvest Festival, and (secondly) to the entire parish work being thrown upon my shoulders by my curate's having unexpectedly extended his holiday. (*A universal roar of delight.*)

Bob—Just his pulpit manner, isn't it? (*Sotto voce, to* Flossie) Now perhaps you'll own I was *right* about Dormer.

Flossie (*in the same tone, to him*)—I must say he can be awfully clever and amusing—when he chooses.

Grace (*replying to* The Rector)—You can plead *no* excuse for trying to be clever at the expense of a clergyman who, with all his peculiarities, has fifty times *your* brains.

The Rector (*to himself*)—I should not have said that Barlam's brains were—— But why should I let myself be annoyed by such a trifle? (*Aloud*) My dear young lady, need I protest that I had not the slightest ideah——?

Bob—Leave this to me, Grace. (*To* The Rector) Not the slightest idea? No, old chap, nobody here ever supposed you *had!* (*Applause.*)

The Rector (*to himself*)—I trust I am not unduly puffed up with the pride of intellect—but *really!* (*Aloud*) I came here in the hope that the natural—ah—bond between the Rectory and the Manor—— (*Shouts of laughter.*) Don't you think—(*with pathos*)—don't you *think* you are making this *rather* difficult for me?

Flossie—It would be easy enough for anyone who wasn't a hopeless idiot.

The Rector (*to himself*)—Can there be insanity in this family? Merely ill-manners, I suspect. I won't give up *just* yet. Perhaps, by patience and sweetness, I shall win them over in the end. (*Aloud, with laboured urbanity*) I am indeed in the Palace of Truth! But there—we must no more look for reverence from the young man than for—er—figs from an—um—ah—thistle. *Must* we?

Ivy Goring—I should have thought myself you would *prefer* the um—ah—thistles. (*Uproarious applause.*)

The Rector (*gasping*)—You compel me to remind you of a certain passage in the beautiful Catechism of our Church which——

Gillian Pinceney—Please don't. There are some things which should be respected—even by a professional buffoon!

The Rector (*thunderstruck*)—A professional buff——! (*Allowing his voice to boom*) Is there *nobody* here capable of answering the most ordinary remark without some monstrous insult?

Colin—Not *your* remarks.

The Rector (*to himself*)—I was never in such a household in all my *life*—never! (*Aloud*) As far as I can distinguish in this dusk, there is a little girl sitting over there. I'm sure she—— (*To* Connie) Are you fond of animals, little girl?

Connie—I'm not fond of animals like you. (*A felicitous repartee, which is received with the wildest enthusiasm.*)

The Rector (*to himself*)—I will make just *one* more effort. (*To* Mrs. Shuttleworth) You must find a great pleasure, Mrs.—ah—Shuttleworth, in occupying such a picturesque, and, I may say, historic house as this?

Mrs. Shutt (*wiping her eyes*)—Oh, dear, is it me again? . . . Yes, it *is* a pleasant house—except when one has to entertain tiresome visitors who *will* ask foolish questions.

The Rector—You may rely upon being secure from such inflictions for the future, madam. (*With warmth*) Why, *why* is it that I can count upon a kindly welcome in the humblest cottage, whereas here——? (*He chokes.*)

Miss Markham (*demurely*)—I really can't say; perhaps cottagers are not very *particular.*

The Rector (*passing his hand over his brow*)—I confess I am utterly at a loss to understand what all this *means!*

Colin—Keep on asking questions. Ask Grace how she'd like to be the Reverend Mrs. Poly, and see what she says. Mummy said only the other day how nice it would be if——

The Rector (*rising*)—Silence, boy! I have heard enough! I have stayed too long. I will go, before I am tempted to disgrace my calling by some unclerical outburst!

All (*in fits of laughter*)—No, no, you mustn't go yet. You haven't said how we've received you!

The Rector (*in a white rage*)—How? *How!!* . . . Why, outrageously! Abominably!! (*General hissing.*)

All—Wrong, wrong! You haven't got it yet. Don't give it up! Try again!

The Rector (*stiffly*)—Pardon me—but a necessarily restricted vocabulary—— (*Howls of laughter.*)

Flossie (*as they calm down*)—Well, the *right* adverb was "rudely."

The Rector—I am not prepared to dispute it. Though there are others which perhaps are even more——

Flossie—I thought you saw it long ago. We might have been a little *ruder*, perhaps.

The Rector—I should be sorry to question your capabilities—but still, I can hardly conceive that possible.

Mrs. Shutt—Well, I don't know *when* I've had such a good laugh. It certainly is a *most* amusing game. Or at least *you* made it so. How wonderfully you did take the poor dear Rector off, to be sure! When you first came in, I said to myself, "That *can't* be Mr. Dormer!" But of course, directly you began to be so ridiculous, I remembered Bob had told us what a mimic you were. You really *ought* to go on the stage. You'd make your fortune as an actor, you would indeed!

The Rector (*dropping feebly into a chair*)—I—ah—you do me too much honour, my dear Mrs. Shuttleworth. (*To himself*) These poor, dear, deluded people! I see now. . . . It was a *game*. . . . They didn't know me in the dark—they don't know me *now!* . . . What a position—for them and me. What a horrible position!

Mrs. Shutt—Grace, my dear, will you ring for the lights?

The Rector (*to himself*)—The lights! If they're brought in, I shall never be able to look this family in the face again! (*Aloud*) Er—ah—so pleased to have afforded you so much—um—ah—innocent amusement —but I'm a little fatigued, and, if you'll allow me, I—I think I'll slip away. (*He makes his exit, amidst hearty rounds of applause.*)

In the Library—A Little Later

Bob (*to Dormer, whom he discovers asleep on a sofa*)—What, lying down, old chap? Well, I must say you *deserve* a rest after your labours.

Dormer (*apologetically*)—Tramping over those beastly wet roots does take it out of a fellow. But hasn't somebody called—the Rector, wasn't it?

Bob—What a chap you are! I should jolly well think it *was* the Rector! Joking apart, old man, you were simply ripping! How on earth you got old Poly's voice and manner so perfectly, after only hearing him once, beats *me*. What with the room being dark, and that, I swear that once or twice, when we were all rotting you, and being as beastly rude as we knew, I half thought you really *were* the Rector.

Dormer (*to himself*)—The Rector must have had the deuce's own time of it! (*Aloud*) I—I hope your mother isn't—er—doesn't——?

Bob—The Mater? Not *she!* She was in fits. And as for the girls, why, they're all raving about you!

Dormer—*Are* they, though? Very nice of them. (*To himself*)—I'm like Thingummy—I've waked to find myself famous!

Bob—The way you kept it up to the very end!

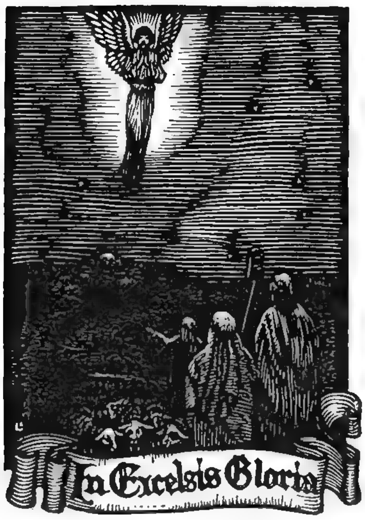
Dormer—I'm glad you think I kept it up to the very end.

Bob—Your exit was a stroke of genius. I'm not flattering you, old chap, it was downright *genius*. I say, you'll do old Poly for us again after dinner, eh?

Dormer—My dear fellow, I couldn't if you paid me. Besides, I—I'd rather, if you don't mind, it didn't get talked about; it—well, it might be *awkward*, don't you know.

Bob (*nodding his head sapiently*)—I see. You mean, it might get round to the Rector, eh?

Dormer—Exactly. It might—er—get round to the Rector. (Curtain)



Christmas

By Catherine Parmenter

Woodcut by J. J. Lankes

There is a silence
On the listening earth . . .
Royal folk and humble
Wait the King's birth.
Snow in the meadow—
Snow in the mart—
But all the songs of Christmas
Sing through my heart!

There is a darkness
Across the world tonight . . .
But oh, the still glory
Of one star's light!
Dear star of Christmas,
Shine softly when
In the blessed manger
He is born again!

So may the holy
Angel-voices sing! . . .
So may the star shine
For the little King! . . .
So may we, as pilgrims,
Seek where He lies . . .
All the love of Christmas
Is in His eyes!

Hors-d'oeuvres from the Newest Books

Aubrey Beardsley

The Python—Twenty Feet of Cyclone

Once I had what might be called a real adventure with a huge python. There are many snakes in the jungle, but one seldom sees them, for the cover is so thick that they can glide away unobserved. I do not believe that I actually saw more than half a dozen during as many months. The python incident would have been horribly fatal except for Miranda, my native boy. We were walking along a narrow animal trail in the jungle. I was ahead and going slowly. Slowly, I felt myself jerked violently backwards and heard Miranda's excited voice.

"Excuse, Master, but big snake right there. You shoot him quick."

He pointed to a thick branch overhanging the trail. Try as I would I could see nothing except a gray tree trunk. Miranda was frantic.

"There, there, don't you see him?"

I did not. Then the breeze moved the leaves a bit and a patch of sunlight fell squarely upon a glittering eye in a dark flat head. Following it back, what I thought was a tree trunk resolved itself into the vast bulk of a python lying close along a low overhanging branch. Perhaps ten feet of the body showed behind the head; the remainder was lost in the thick shadows of the tree.

I backed thirty feet away, lined my sights on that glittering eye and fired. A cyclone seemed to have struck the jungle. I caught a glimpse of yards and yards of snake, writhing, twisting, slashing. Vines and creepers were torn, small trees shattered. Miranda and I ran, for it seemed that anything might happen. It must have been half an hour before the jungle was quiet again and we dared to slip back to where the eruption had taken place. The snake was there all right, its enormous body twisted into folds and knots. My bullet had smashed the head to pulp. We straightened it out as best we could and I paced the length. It was pretty close to twenty feet.

Ends of the Earth. Roy Chapman Andrews.

Commerce on a Desert Isle

When we reopened the store the little space between the counter and the door was jammed with people. An old man, whom I shall call Ezekiel because his name sounds something like that, was the first customer. Elbowing his way through the crowd he laid a pound note on the counter, and in a halting voice asked for a tin of talcum-powder. . . . I wrapped the tin in a piece of illustrated newspaper and handed it to the old man. When I turned to count out his change he moved to the door, where he became the centre of an envious group, who examined the paper while a young girl took the tin and shook the powder into her hair with screams of delight. . . . I had Benny call him back, and put the change—seventeen and sixpence—in his hand.

He gazed in stupid amazement at the money, at me, at Benny, and back again at the money. Gradually a light came into his watery eyes—he understood that somehow or other it did not require all his pound to pay for a tin of talc.

His next purchase was a long strip of fiery red pongee, and the same dumbfounded expression came into his eyes when I took only a part of his money. Then he bought a box of matches; he decided to play the game with this remarkable white man, to get as much as possible for his money, for it was evident that Captain Viggo's new trader didn't understand his business. Next he bought some tobacco, brass wire, fishhooks, and a tin-whistle. At last there was only a sixpence left. He gazed long and wistfully at the various flashy trade goods, finally setting his choice on a red and yellow striped shirt worth—or, rather, priced—ten shillings. I tried to explain that there was not enough money left to pay for it, but he could not understand and went from the store convinced, I think, that I was cheating him. . . .

I realized that my honesty would be sorely tried on Puka-Puka, for I could charge a penny or a pound and, with the exception of a half-dozen of the ultra-learned, no one would be the wiser. I resolved on that first day never to cheat these simple-minded folk.

The Book of Puka-Puka. Robert Dean Frisbie.

THE YANKEE MARINES UNDER FIRE

The troops in the woods up above are in a panic. They have massed up. Now they come flying down into the ravine for protection. At once the shelling seems to concentrate on the ravine. It becomes a wild mass of men scrambling and ducking, trying to get away from the shells. The shelling grows worse. The trees crash, and there is a continuous roar like heavy winds. The shells hit, and the dirt and rocks fly up in the air. The men are running blindly. Some crawl among the rocks to hide.

Two men come plunging into the hole on my left. One yells, "Gimme that —— —— hole. . . ."

There is a struggle. The other man lands back in the ravine on his back as though pushed very forcibly. His hands and feet wave in the air a moment. His right hand still grasps his rifle with bayonet bared. He rises with a bound and races for the hole with his rifle stretched before him. He lunges forward with all his strength. The impact causes him to stagger back. He falls among the rocks and lies still.

Suddenly another fellow comes plunging head first into my hole. . . . I push at him and holler, "No room! . . . Get out! . . . Get out! . . ."

At the same time a fellow tries to plunge into Young's hole, next to mine, and Young pushes him out too. They try to get shelter among the rocks where the other man is lying. A shell strikes those rocks with a blinding flash and seems to splatter the three men right into the rocks. The rocks split open and blood runs down their sides. The rocks are crushed. The men are gone. It seems to rain blood. Drops of blood like red rain fall about my hole. And I see legs and helmets.

God Have Mercy on Us! WILLIAM T. SCANLON.

A NEGLECTED ROMEO

If she were occupied, so would he be. He could be absorbed, too. He decided to have a delightful comradeship with his mother, and suggested to her, fanning on the porch, that he and she go to the movies in Hamilton.

"Well, but why didn't you speak of it before, Clifford? It seems such a crazy notion, a hot night like this. . . . Suppose a thunder storm comes up, how about the windows?"

"Papa'll be here."

"Why don't you go over to the Kings' and ask them if they don't want to go, Dutch treat?"

"I don't *want* to go with the Kings!"

"Well, all right, all right! Only it seems so kind of crazy, all of a sudden this way." . . .

His mother gasped that it was hot, between reading each title to him. After the picture he suggested ice cream.

"Well, I don't know—it's simply stifling! Wouldn't it be more sensible just to go home! Whoo! I thought I'd die in that stuffy place."

"It'll cool you off."

In "The Sugar Bowl" he tried earnestly to make her look on the evening as something light-heartedly humorous. A man with a wet face and rolled-up shirt sleeves brought them ice water, and deprecatingly made his little joke: "Think we'll have frost tonight?" But he got no response from Mrs. Hunter.

"How about a fresh fruit sundae, mother?"

"*Thirty* cents, Clifford!"

"This is my party."

"Well, Mr. Millionaire——!"

"Two fresh fruit sundaes, please. What kind, mother?"

"Oh, I don't know. Let's see. Really, I hardly care for anything—you go ahead and have whatever you like while I just sip my ice-water. Oh, well, fresh pineapple, I guess."

But they only had fresh peach, so Mrs. Hunter took that, looking injured, although she really liked it better. She ate disapprovingly, small bits from the tip of the spoon. . . .

He left a too-large tip under his plate, and as they went home beneath a sky that quivered with heat lightning his mother told him what she thought about it.

"They simply laugh at you behind your back!"

The Methodist Faun. ANNE PARRISH.

THE ROYAL CHILDREN RIDE TO THE CORONATION

No sooner had the State carriage left Buckingham Palace than Prince Albert, Prince Henry, and Prince George began to nudge each other and giggle and laugh at the decorous and upright bearing of their elder brother the Prince of Wales, and Princess Mary. . . .

Princess Mary sharply remonstrated with her brothers, and told them to "behave themselves"; but her shocked reproof fell on unheeding ears—"Bertie," "Harry," and "George" were beginning mischievously to enjoy themselves. All the time the great carriage was being drawn between the lines of upright Guards and the cheering masses of the people. Prince George, sitting exactly opposite Princess Mary, now made an attempt to tickle her in the hope of destroying her proper and perfect dignity; in the effort he slipped suddenly off the leather seat to the floor of the coach.

Princess Mary, stooping to pick him up, lost her coronet, which rolled to the floor. For a moment all was confusion; then the Prince of Wales chivalrously retrieved his sister's coronet, and, placing it on her head, sharply told his brothers that if they did not behave themselves he would administer there and then the necessary chastisement to enforce such conduct.

Once in Westminster Abbey, however, the Royal children were awed into the most decorous behaviour. The Prince of Wales particularly carried through his duties as Heir to the Throne in the most dignified and impressive manner.

The Biography of H. R. H. the Prince of Wales.
W. and L. TOWNSEND.

[THE GOLDEN BOOK *Editorial Department, as a service to readers, will be glad to furnish information as to publisher, price, etc., of any volume mentioned here.*]

By HENRY JAMES

The Great Condition

Henry James

“AH, THERE, CONFOUND IT!” said Bertram Braddle when he had once more frowned, so far as he could frown, over his telegram. “I *must* catch the train if I'm to have my morning clear in town. And it's a most abominable nuisance!”

“Do you mean on account of—a—*her?*” asked, after a minute's silent sympathy, the friend to whom—in the hall of the hotel, still bestrewn with the appurtenances of the newly disembarked—he had thus querulously addressed himself.

He looked hard for an instant at Henry Chilver, but the hardness was not all produced by Chilver's question. His annoyance at not being able to spend his night at Liverpool was visibly the greatest that such a privation can be conceived as producing, and might have seemed indeed to transcend the limits of its occasion. “I promised her the second day out that, no matter at what hour we should get in, I would see her up to London and save her having to take a step by herself.”

“And you piled up the assurance”—Chilver somewhat irrelevantly laughed—“with each successive day!”

“Naturally—for what is there to do between New York and Queenstown but pile up? And now, with this pistol at my head”—crumpling the telegram with an angry fist, he tossed it into the wide public chimney-place—“I leave her to scramble through tomorrow as she can. She has to go on to Brighton, and she doesn't know——” And Braddle's quickened sense of the perversity of things dropped to a moment's helpless communion with the aggravating face of his watch.

“She doesn't know——?” his friend conscientiously echoed.

“Oh, she doesn't know anything! Should you say it's too late to ask for a word with her?”

Chilver, with his eyes on the big hotel clock, wondered. “Latish—isn't it?—when she must have been gone this quarter of an hour to her room.”

“Yes, I'm bound to say she *has* managed *that* for herself!” and Braddle stuck back his watch. “So that, as I haven't time to write, there's nothing for me but to wire her—ever so apologetically—the first thing in the morning from town.”

“Surely—as for the steamer special, there are now only about five minutes left.”

“Good, then—I join you,” said Braddle, with a sigh of submission. “But where's the brute who took my things? Yours went straight to the station?”

“No—they're still out there on the cab from which I set you down. And there's your chap with your stuff”—Chilver's eye had just caught the man—“he's ramming it into the lift. Collar him before it goes up.” Bertram Braddle, on this, sprang forward in time; then, while at an office-window that opened into an inner sanctuary, he explained his case to a neatly fitted priestess whose cold eyes looked straight through nonsense, putting it before her that he should after all not require the room he had telegraphed for, his companion only turned uneasily about at a distance and made no approach to the arrested four-wheeler that, at the dock, had received both the gentlemen and their effects. “I join you—I join you,” Braddle repeated as he brought back his larger share of these.

Chilver appeared meanwhile to have found freedom of mind for a decision. “But, my dear fellow, shall I too then go?”

Braddle stared. “Why, I thought you *had* to.”

“Not if I can be of any use to you. I mean, by stopping over and offering my very inferior—aid——”

“To Mrs. Damerel?” Braddle took in his friend's sudden and—as it presented itself—singularly obliging change of plan. “Ah, you want to be of use to *her?*”

“Only if it will take her off your mind till you see her again. I don't mind telling you now,” Chilver courageously continued, “that I'm not positively in such a hurry. I said I'd catch the train, because I thought you wanted to be alone with her.”

The young men stood there now a trifle rigidly, but very expressively, face to face: Bertram Braddle, the younger but much the taller, smooth, handsome, and heavy, with the composition of his dress so elaborately informal, his pleasant monocular scowl so religiously fixed, his hat so despairingly tilted, and his usual air—innocent enough, however—of looking down from some height still greater—as everyone knew about the rich, the bloated Braddles—than that of his fine stature; Chilver, slight and comparatively colourless, rather sharp than bright, but with—in spite of a happy brown mustache, scantily professional, but envied by the man whose large, empty, sunny face needed, as some one had said, a little planting—no particular "looks" save those that dwelt in his intelligent eyes. "And what did you think I wanted to do?"

"Exactly what you say. To present yourself in a taking light—to deepen the impression you've been at so much trouble to make. But if you don't care for my stopping——!" And tossing away the end of his cigarette with a gesture of good-humoured renouncement, Chilver moved across the marble slabs to the draughty portal that kept swinging from the street.

There were porters, travelers, other impediments in his way, and this gave Braddle an appreciable time to watch his receding back before it disappeared; the prompt consequence of which was an "I say, Chilver!" launched after him sharply enough to make him turn round before passing out. The speaker had not otherwise stirred, and the interval of space doubtless took something from the straightness of their further mute communication. This interval, the next minute, as Chilver failed to return, Braddle diminished by gaining the door in company with a porter whose arm he had seized on the way. "Take this gentleman's things off the cab and put on mine." Then, as he turned to his friend: "Go and tell the young woman there that you'll have the room I've given up."

Chilver laid upon him a hand interrogative enough not to be too grateful. "Are you sure it's all right?"

Braddle's face simply followed for a moment, in the outer lamplight, the progress of the operation he had decreed. "Do you think I'm going to allow you to make out that I'm afraid?"

"Well, my dear chap, why shouldn't you be?" Henry Chilver, with this retort, did nothing; he only, with his hands in his pockets, let the porter and the cabman bestir themselves. "I simply wanted to be civil."

"Oh, I'll risk it!" said the younger man with a free enough laugh. "Be awfully attentive, you know."

"Of course it won't be anything like the same thing to *her*," Chilver went on.

"Of course not, but explain. Tell her I'm wiring, writing. Do everything, in short. Good-by."

"Good-by, good-by, old man." And Chilver went down with him to the rearranged cab. "So many thanks."

"Thanks?" said the other as he got in.

"I mean because I'm—hang it!—just tired enough to be glad to go to bed."

"Oh!" came rather drily from Braddle out of the window of the cab.

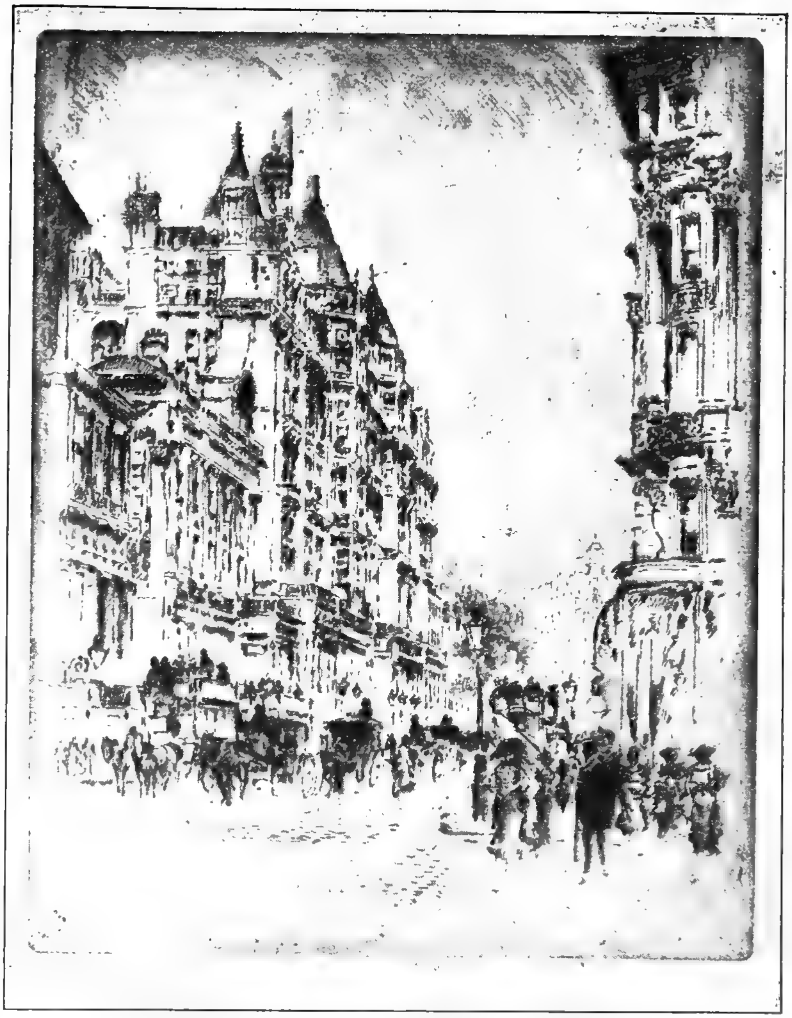
"You shall have my report!" Chilver continued.

"Ah, I shall have Mrs. Damerel's!" Braddle answered as the cab drove away.

II

THE FATIGUE OF WHICH Chilver had spoken sought relief for the time in a good deal of rather pointless activity, and it was not for an hour after he had taken possession of his room that he lay down to close his eyes. He moved, before this, in his narrow limits, up and down and to and fro; he left his smaller portmanteau gaping but unpacked; he fumbled in his dressing-bag for a book and dropped with it into a chair. But when in this position he let his attention very soon wander and his lids finally droop, it was not at all that sleep had overcome him. Something had overcome him, on the contrary, that, a quarter of an hour later, made him jump up and consult the watch he had transferred from his pocket to his bedside as his only step toward undressing. He quickly restored it to its receptacle and, catching up his hat, left the room and took his course downstairs. Here, for another quarter of an hour, he wandered, waited, looked about. He had been rather positive to his comrade on the question of Mrs. Damerel's possible, impossible reappearance; but his movements, for some time, could have been explained only by an unquenched imagination that, late though the hour, she might "nip" down—so in fact he mentally phrased it: well, for what? To indulge—it was conceivable—an appetite unappeased by the five-and-twenty meals (Braddle had seen them all served to her on deck) of the rapid voyage. He kept glancing into the irresponsive coffee-room and peeping through the glass door of a smaller blank, bright apartment in which a lonely, ugly lady, hatted and coated and hugging a bundle of shawls, sat glaring into space with an anxiety of her own. When at last he returned to his room, however, it was quite with the recognition that such a person as Mrs. Damerel wouldn't at all at that hour be knocking about the hotel. On the other hand—his vigil still encouraged the reflection—what appeared less like her than her giving them the slip, on their all leaving the dock, so unceremoniously; making her independent dash for a good room at the inn the very moment the Customs people had passed her luggage? It was perhaps the fatiguing futility of this question that at last sent Henry Chilver to bed and to sleep.

That restorative proved the next morning to have considerably cleared and settled his consciousness. He found himself immediately aware of being in no position to say what was or was not "like" Mrs. Damerel. He knew as little about her as Braddle knew, and it was his conviction that Braddle's ignorance had kept regular step with all the rest of the conditions. These conditions were, to begin with, that, seated next her at table for the very first repast, Bertram had struck up with her a friendship of which the leaps and bounds were, in the social, the sentimental sphere, not less remarkable than those with which the great hurrying ship took its way through the sea. They were, further, that, unlike all the other women, so numerous and, in the fine weather, so "chatty," she had succeeded in incurring the acquaintance of nobody in the immense company but themselves. Three or four men had more or less made up to her, but with none of the ladies had she found it inevitable to exchange, to his observation—and oh, his attention, at least, had been deep!—three words. The great fact above all had been—as it now glimmered back to him—that he had studied her not so much in her own demonstrations, which had been few and passive, as in those of his absolutely alienated companion. He had been reduced to contemplation resignedly remote, since Braddle now monopolized her, and had thus seen her largely through his surprise at the constancy of Braddle's interest. The affinities hitherto—in other cases—recognized by his friend he had generally made out as of an order much less fine. There were lots of women on the ship who might easily have been supposed to be a good deal more his affair. Not one of them had, however, by any perversity corresponding with that of the connection under his eyes, become in any degree Chilver's own. He had the feeling, on the huge crowded boat, of making the voyage in singular solitude, mitigated only by the amusement of finding Braddle so "mashed," and of wondering what would come of it. Much less, up to that moment, had come of the general American exposure than each, on their sailing westward for the more and more prescribed near view, had freely foretold to the other as the least they were likely to get off with. The near view of the big queer country had at last, this summer, imposed itself: so many other men had got it and were making it, in talk, not only a convenience but a good deal of a nuisance, that it appeared to have become, defensively, as necessary as the electric light in the flat one might wish to let; as to which the two friends, after their ten bustling weeks, had now in fact grown to feel that they could press the American button with the best.



From an Etching by Joseph Pennell. Courtesy Kleeman-Thorman Galleries, Ltd.

Fashionable Knightsbridge, London

But they had been on the whole—Chilver at least had been—disappointed in the celebrated (and were they not *all*, in the United States, celebrated?) native women. He didn't quite know what he had expected: something or other, at any rate, that had not taken place. He felt as if he had carried over in his portmanteau a courtship or a wedding garment and were bringing it back untouched, unfolded, in creases unrelieved and almost painfully aware of themselves. They had taken lots of letters—most of them, some fellow who knew had told them, awfully good ones; they had been to Washington and Boston and Newport and Mount Desert, walking round and round the vociferous whirlpool, but neither tumbling in nor feeling at any moment, as if it appeared at all dangerously dizzy; so that here—in relation to Mrs. Damerel—was the oddity of an impression vertiginous only after everything might have been supposed to be well over. This lady was the first female American they had met, of almost any age, who was not celebrated; yet she was the one who suggested most to Chilver something he now imagined himself originally to have gone forth expecting to feel. She was a person to whom they couldn't possibly have had a letter; she had never in her life been to Newport; she was on her way to England for the first time; she was, in short, most inconsistently, though indeed quite unblushingly, obscure. She was only charming in a new way. It was newer, somehow, than any of the others that were so fresh. Yet what should he call it if he were trying—in a foolish flight of analysis to somebody else—to describe it? When he asked himself this he was verily brought, from one thing to another, to recognizing that it was probably in fact as old as the hills. All that was new in it was that he was in love with her; and moreover without in the least knowing her, so completely, so heroically, from the point of honour, had he, for all the six days, left her to poor Braddle. Well, if he should now take her up to town he would be a little less ignorant. He liked, naturally, to think he should be of use to her, but he flattered himself he kept the point of honour well in view. To Braddle—given Braddle's uneasiness—he should be equally of use.

III

THIS LAST APPEARANCE was in a short time abundantly confirmed; not only when, in London, after the discharge of his mission, he submitted to his friend a detailed account of that happy transaction, but ten days later, on Braddle's own return from Brighton, where he had promptly put in a week—a week of which, visibly, the sole and irresistible motive was Mrs. Damerel, established there as a sequel to Chilver's attendance on her from Liverpool to Euston, and from Euston, within the hour—so immediately that she got off before her other friend had had time to turn up at either station—to Victoria. This other friend passed in London, while at Brighton, the inside of a day, rapping with a familiar stick—at an hour supposedly not dedicated, in those gray courts, to profane speculation—the door of dingy Temple chambers in which, after the most extravagant holiday of his life, Henry Chilver had found it salutary to sit and imagine himself "reading." But Braddle had always been, portentously, a person of free mornings—his nominal occupation that of looking after his father's "interests," and his actual that of spending, though quite without scandal, this personage's money, of which, luckily, there seemed an abundance. What came from him on this occasion connected itself with something that had passed between them on their previous meeting, the one immediately following the incident at Liverpool. Chilver had at that time been rather surprised to hear his friend suddenly bring out: "You don't then think there's anything 'off' about her?"

"Off?" Chilver could at least be perfectly vague. "Off what?"

"What's the beastly phrase? 'Off colour.' I mean, do you think she's all right?"

"Are you in love with her?" Chilver after a moment demanded.

"Damn it, of course I'm in love with her!" Braddle joyously articulated.

"Well then, doesn't that give you——?"

"Give me what?" he asked with impatience at his companion's pause.

"Well, a sort of searching light——"

"For reading her clear?" Braddle broke in. "How can you ask—as a man of the world—anything so idiotic? Where did you ever discover that being in love makes a searching light, makes anything but a most damnable and demoralizing darkness? One has been in love with creatures such that one's condition has lighted nothing in the world but one's asininity. *I* have, at any rate. And so have you!"

"No, I've never been really in love at all," said Chilver, good-humouredly.

"The less credit to you, then, to have—in two or three cases I recall—made such a fool of yourself. I, at all events—I don't mind your knowing," Braddle went on—"am harder hit, far and away, than I've ever been. But I don't in the least pretend to place her or to have a free judgment about her. I've already—since we landed—had two letters from her, and I go down tomorrow to see her. That *may* assist me—it ought to—to make her out a little better. But I've a gruesome feeling that it won't!"

"Then how can I help you?" Chilver inquired, with just irritation enough to make him, the next moment—though his interlocutor, interestingly worried but really most inexpert, had no answer for the question—sorry to have shown it. "If you've heard from her," he continued, "did she send me a message?"

"None whatever."

"Nor say anything about me?"

"Not a word."

"Ah!" said Henry Chilver, while their eyes again met with some insistence. He somehow liked Mrs. Damerel's silence after the hours he had spent with her; but his state of mind was again predominantly of not wanting Braddle to see in him any emotion. "A woman may surely be called all right, it seems to me, when she's pretty and clever and good."

"'Good'?" Braddle echoed. "How do you know she's good?"

"Why, confound you, she's such a lady."

"*Isn't* she?"—Braddle took it up with equal promptitude and inconsequence. Then he recovered himself. "All the same, one has known ladies——!"

"Yes, one has. But she's quite the best thing that, in the whole time, we've come across."

"Oh, by a long shot. Think of those women on the ship. It's only that she's so poor," Braddle added.

Chilver hesitated. "Is she so awfully?"

"She has evidently to count her shillings."

"Well, if she had been bad she'd be rich," Chilver returned after another silence. "So what more do you want?"

"Nothing. Nothing," Braddle repeated.

"Good-by, then."

"Good-by."

On which the elder man had taken leave; so that what was inevitably to follow had to wait for their next meeting. Mrs. Damerel's victim betrayed on this second occasion still more markedly the state of a worried man, and his friend measured his unrest by his obvious need of a patient ear, a need with which Chilver's own nature, this interlocutor felt, would not in the same conditions have been acquainted. Even while he wondered, however, at the freedom his visitor used, Chilver recognized that had it been a case of more or less fatuous happiness Braddle would probably have kept the matter to himself. His host made the reflection that *he*, on the other hand, might have babbled about a confidence, but would never have opened his mouth about a fear. Braddle's fear, like many fears, had a considerable queerness, and Chilver, in presence of it and even before a full glimpse, had begun to describe it to himself as a fixed idea. It was as if, according to Braddle, there had been something in Mrs. Damerel's history that she ought really to have told a fellow before letting him in so far.

"But how far?"

"Why, hang it, I'd marry her tomorrow."

Chilver waited a moment. "Is what you mean that she'd marry *you?*"

"Yes, blessed if I don't believe she certainly would."

"You mean if you'd let her off——?"

"Yes," Braddle concurred; "the obligation of letting me know the particular thing that, whatever it is, right or wrong, I've somehow got it so tormentingly into my head that she keeps back."

"When you say 'keeps back,' do you mean that you've questioned her?"

"Oh, not about *that!*" said Braddle with beautiful simplicity.

"Then do you expect her to volunteer information——"

"That may damage her so awfully with me?" Braddle had taken it up intelligently, but appeared sufficiently at a loss as to what he expected. "I'm sure she knows well enough I want to know."

"I don't think I understand what you're talking about," Chilver replied after a longish stare at the fire.

"Well, about something or other in her life; some awkward passage, some beastly episode or accident; the things that do happen, that often *have* happened, to women you might think perfectly straight—come now! and that they very often quite successfully hide. You know what I'm driving at: some chapter in the book difficult to read aloud—some unlucky page she'd like to tear out. God forgive me, some slip."

Chilver, quitting the fire, had taken a turn round the room.

"Is it your idea," he presently inquired, "that there may have been only *one?* I mean one 'slip'?" He pulled up long enough in front of them to give his visitor's eyes time to show a guess at possible derision, then he went on in another manner. "No, no; I really don't understand. You seem to me to see her as a column of figures each in itself highly satisfactory, but which, when you add them up, make only a total of doubt."

"That's exactly it!" Braddle spoke almost with admiration of this neat formula. "She hasn't really *any* references."

"But, my dear man, it's not as if you were engaging a housemaid."

Braddle was arrested but a moment. "It's much worse. For anyone else I shouldn't mind——!"

"What I don't grasp," his companion broke in, "is your liking her so much as to 'mind' so much, without by the same stroke liking her enough not to mind at all."

Braddle took in without confusion this approach to subtlety. "But suppose it should be something rather awful?"

It was his confidant, rather, who was a trifle disconcerted. "Isn't it just as easy—besides being much more comfortable—to suppose there's nothing?"

"No. If it had been, don't you see that I *would* have supposed it? There's something. I don't know what there is; but there's something."

"Then ask her."

Braddle wondered. "Would *you?*"

"Oh dear, no!"

"Then *I* won't!" Braddle returned with an odd air of defiance that made his host break into a laugh. "Suppose," he continued, "she should swear there's nothing."

"The chance of that is just why it strikes me you might ask her."

"I 'might'? I thought you said one shouldn't."

"*I* shouldn't. But I haven't your ideas."

"Ah, but you don't know her."

Chilver hesitated. "Precisely. And what you mean is that, even if she should swear there's nothing, you wouldn't believe her?"

Braddle appeared to give a silent and even somewhat diffident assent. "There's nothing I should hate like that. I should hate it still more than being as I am. If you had seen more of her," he pursued, "you would know what I mean by her having no references. Her whole life has been so extraordinarily—so conveniently, as one might say—away from everything."

"I see—so conveniently for *her*. Beyond verification."

"Exactly; the record's inaccessible. It's all the 'great West.' We saw something of the great West, and I thought it rather *too* great. She appears to have put in a lot of California and the Sandwich Islands. I may be too particular, but I don't fancy a Sandwich Islands past. Even for her husband and for her little girl—for their having lived as little as for their having died—she has nothing to show. She hasn't so much as a photograph, a lock of hair, or an announcement in a newspaper."

Chilver thought. "But perhaps she wouldn't naturally leave such things about the sitting-room of a Brighton lodging."

"I dare say not. But it isn't only such things. It's tremendously odd, her never having even by mere chance knocked against anything or anyone that one has ever heard of or could—if one should want to—get at."

AGAIN HENRY CHILVER reflected. "Well, that's what struck me as especially nice, or rather as very remarkable in her—her being, with all her attraction, one of the obscure seventy millions; a mere little almost nameless tossed-up flower out of the huge mixed lap of the great American people. I mean for the charming person she is. I doubt if, after all, any other huge mixed lap——"

"Yes, if she were English, on those lines," Braddle sagaciously interrupted, "one wouldn't look at her, would one? I say, fancy her English!"

Chilver was silent a little. "What you don't like is her music."

His visitor met his eyes. "Why, it's awfully good."

"Is it? I mean her having, as you told me on the boat, given lessons."

"That certainly is not what I most like her to have done—I mean on account of some of the persons she may have given them *to;* but when her voice broke down she had to do something. She had sung in public—though only in concerts; but that's another thing. She lost her voice after an illness. I don't know what the illness was. It was after her husband's death. She plays quite wonderfully—better, she says, really, than she sang; so she has that resource. She gave the lessons in the Sandwich Islands. She admits that, fighting for her own hand, as she says, she has kept some queer company. I've asked her for details, but she only says she'll tell me 'some day.' Well, *what* day, don't you know? Finally she inherited a little money—she says from a distant cousin. I don't call *that* distant—setting her up. It isn't much, but it made the difference, and there she is. She says she's afraid of London; but I don't quite see in what sense. She heard about her place at Brighton from some 'Western friends.' But how can I go and ask them?"

"The Western friends?" said Chilver.

"No, the people of the house—about the other people. The place is rather beastly, but it seems all right. At any rate she likes it. If there's an awful hole on earth it's Brighton, but she thinks it 'perfectly fascinating.' Now isn't that a rum note? She's the most extraordinary mixture."

Chilver had listened with an air of strained delicacy to this broken trickle of anguish, speaking to the point only when it appeared altogether to have ceased. "Well, my dear man, what is it, may I ask in all sympathy, you would like me, in the circumstances, to do? Do you want me to sound her for you?"

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"Don't be *too* excruciatingly funny," Braddle after a moment replied.

"Well, then, clear the thing up."

"But how?"

"By making her let you know the worst."

"And by what means—if I don't ask her?"

"Simply by proposing."

"Marriage?"

"Marriage, naturally."

"You consider," Braddle inquired, "that that will infallibly make her speak?"

"Not infallibly, but probably."

Braddle looked all round the room. "But if it shouldn't?"

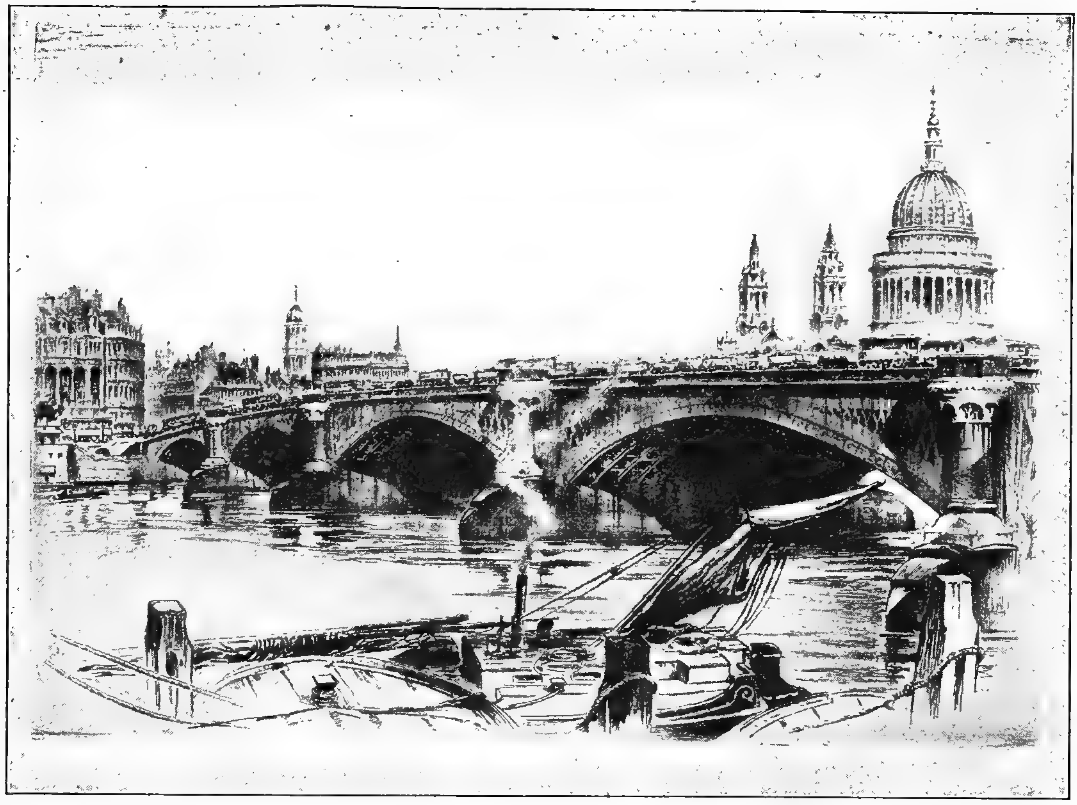
His friend took another turn about. "Well—risk it!"

IV

Henry Chilver remained for a much longer time than he would have expected in ignorance of the effect of that admonition; two full months elapsed without bringing him news. Something, he meanwhile reasoned, he *should* know—ought to know: it was due to him assuredly that Bertram Braddle shouldn't—quite apart from the distance traveled in the company of Mrs. Damerel—go so far even with *him* without recognizing the propriety of going further. But at last, as the weeks passed, he arrived at his own estimate of a situation which had clearly nothing more to give him. It was a situation that had simply ceased to be one. Braddle was afraid and had remained afraid, just as he was ashamed and had remained ashamed. He had bolted, in his embarrassment, to Australia or the Cape; unless indeed he had dashed off once more to America, this time perhaps in quest of his so invidious "references." Was he looking for tracks in the great West, or listening to twaddle in the Sandwich Islands? In any case Mrs. Damerel would be alone, and the point of honour, for Chilver himself, would have had its day. The sharpest thing in his life at present was the desire to see her again, and he considered that every hour without information made a difference for the question of avoiding her from delicacy. Finally, one morning, with the first faint winter light, it became vivid to him that the dictate of delicacy was positively the other way—was that, on the basis of Braddle's disappearance, he should make her some sign of recollection. He had not forgotten the address observed on one of her luggage-labels the day he had seen her up from Liverpool. Mightn't he, for instance, run down to her place that very morning? Braddle couldn't expect——! What Braddle couldn't expect was lost in the suppressed sound with which, on passing into his sitting-room and taking up his fresh letters, he greeted the superscription of the last of the half-dozen just placed on his table. The envelop bore the postmark of Brighton, and if he had languished for information the very first lines—the note was only of a page—were charged with it. Braddle announced his engagement to Mrs. Damerel, spoke briefly, but with emphasis, of their great happiness and their early nuptials, and hoped very much his correspondent would be able to come down and see them for a day.

Henry Chilver, it may be stated, had, for reasons of feeling—he felt somehow so deeply refuted—to wait a certain time to answer. What had Mrs. Damerel's lover, he wondered, succeeded at last in extracting from her? She had made up her mind as to what she could safely do—she had let him know the worst and he had swallowed it down? What *was* it, the queer suppressed chapter; what was the awkward page they had agreed to tear out together? Chilver found himself envying his friend the romance of having been sustained in the special effort, the extreme sacrifice, involved in such an understanding. But he had for many days, of the whole vision, odd impatiences that were followed by odder recoveries. One of these variations was a sudden drop of the desire to be in presence of the woman for the sight of whom he had all winter consistently been yearning. What was most marked, however, was the shake he had vigorously to give himself on perceiving his thoughts again and again take the direction that poor Braddle had too successfully imparted to them. His curiosity about the concession she might have made to Braddle's was an assumption —without Braddle's excuses—that she had really had something to conceal till she was sure of her man. This was idiotic, because the idea was one that never would have originated with himself.

He did at last fix a day, none the less, and went down; but there, on the spot, his imagination was, to his surprise, freshly excited by the very fact that there were no apparent signs of a drama. It was as if he could see, after all, even face to face with her, what had stirred within the man she had for a time only imperfectly subdued. Why should she have tried to be so simple—too simple? She overdid it, she ignored too much. Clear, soft, sweet, yet not a bit silly, she might well strike a fellow as having had more history than she—what should one call it?—owned up to. There were moments when Chilver thought he got hold of it in saying to himself that she was too clever to be merely what she was. There was something in her that, more than anything ever in anyone, gratified his taste and seemed to him to testify to the happiest exercise of her own; and such things brought up the puzzle of how so much taste could have landed her simply where she was. Where she was—well, was doubtless where she would find comfort, for the man she had accepted was now visibly at peace, even though he had not yet, as appeared, introduced her to his people. The fact of which Chilver was at last as at first most conscious was the way she succeeded in withholding from his own penetration every trace of the great question she had had out with her intended, who yet couldn't have failed—one would quite have defied him—to give it to her somehow that he had on two occasions allowed his tongue to betray him to the other person he most trusted. Braddle, whose taste was not his strong point, had probably mentioned this indiscretion to her as a drollery; or else she had simply questioned him, got it out of him. This made their guest a participant, but there was something beautiful and final in the curtain that, on her side, she had dropped. It never gave, all day, the faintest stir. That affected Chilver as the mark of what there might be behind.



From an etching by Fred A. Farrell, Courtesy Schwartz Galleries

Blackfriar's Bridge

Yet when in the evening his friend went with him to the station—for the visitor had declined to sleep and was taking the last train back—he had, after they had walked two or three times up and down the platform, the greatest mystification of all. They were smoking; there were ten minutes to spare, and they moved to and fro in silence. They had been talking all day—mainly in Mrs. Damerel's company, but the circumstance that neither spoke at present was not the less marked. Yet if Chilver was waiting for something on his host's part he could scarcely have said for what. He was aware now that if Mrs. Damerel had, as he privately phrased it, "spoken," it was scarcely to be expected that the man with a standpoint altered by a definite engagement would—at the present stage at least—repeat to him her words. He felt, however, as the fruitless moments ebbed, a trifle wronged, at all events disappointed: since he had been dragged into the business, as he always for himself expressed it, it would only have been fair to throw a sop to his conjecture. What, moreover, was Braddle himself so perversely and persistently mum for—without an illusion that should even serve as a penance—unless to draw out some advance which might help him to revert with an approach to grace? Chilver nevertheless made no advance, and at last as, ceasing to stroll, they stood at the open door of an empty compartment, the train was almost immediately to start. At this moment they exchanged a long, queer stare.

"Well, good-by," said the elder man.

"Good-by." Chilver still waited before entering the carriage, but just as he was about to give up his companion added: "You see I followed your advice. I took the risk."

"Oh—about the question we discussed?" Chilver broke now, on the instant, into friendly response. "See, then, how right I was."

Braddle looked up and down the train. "I don't know."

"You're not satisfied?"

"Satisfied?" Still Braddle looked away.

"With what she has told you."

Braddle faced him again. "She has told me nothing."

"Nothing?"

"Nothing. She has accepted me—that's all. Not a bit else. So, you see, you *weren't* so right."

"Oh—oh!" exclaimed Chilver, protestingly. The guard at this moment interposing with a "Take your seats, please!" and sharply, on his entering the carriage, shutting the door on him, he continued the conversation from the window, on which he rested his elbows. During the movement his protest had changed to something else. "Ah, but won't she yet——?"

"Let me have it? I'm sure I don't know. All I can say is that nothing has come from her."

"Then it's because there *is* nothing."

"I hope so," said Braddle from the platform.

"So you see," Chilver called out as the train moved, "I *was* right!" And he leaned forth as the distance grew and Braddle stood motionless and grave, gaily insisting and taking leave with his waving hand. But when he drew in his head and dropped into a seat he rather collapsed, tossing his hat across the compartment and sinking back into a corner and an attitude from which, staring before him and not even lighting another cigarette, he never budged till he reached Victoria.

A fortnight later the footfall of Mrs. Damerel's intended was loud on the old staircase in the Temple and the knob of his stick louder still on the old door. "It's only that it has rather stuck in my crop," he presently explained, "that I let you leave Brighton the other day with the pretension that you had been 'right,' as you called it, about the risk—attending the particular step—that I took. I can't help it if I want you to know—for it bores me that you're so pleased—that you weren't in the least right. You were most uncommonly wrong."

"Wrong?"

"Wrong."

Chilver looked vaguely about as if suddenly in search of something, then moved with an odd general inconsequence to the window. "As the day's so fine, do you mind our getting out of this beastly stuffy place into the Gardens? We can talk there." His hat was apparently what he had been looking for, and he took it up, and with it some cigarettes. Braddle, though seemingly disconcerted by what threatened to be practically a change of subject, replied that he didn't care a hang; so that, leaving the room, they passed together down to the court and through other battered courts and crooked ways. The dim London sunshine in the great surrounded garden had a kindness, and the hum of the town was as hindered and yet as present as the faint sense of spring. The two men stopped together before a bench, but neither for the moment sat down. "Do you mean she *has* told you?" Chilver at last brought out.

"No—it's just what she hasn't done."

"Then how the deuce am I wrong?"

"She has admitted that there *is* something."

Chilver markedly wondered. "Something? What?"

"That's just what I want to know."

"Then you *have* asked her?"

Braddle hesitated. "I couldn't resist my curiosity, my anxiety—call it what you will. I've been too worried. I put it to her the day after you were down there."

"And how did you put it?"

"Oh, just simply, brutally, disgustingly. I said: "Isn't there something about yourself—something or other that has happened to you—that you're keeping back?'"

Chilver was attentive, but not solemn. "Well?"

"Oh, she admitted it."

"And in what terms?"

"'Well, since you really drive me to the wall, there *is* something.'"

Chilver continued to consider. "And is that all she says?"

"No—she says she *will* tell me."

"Ah well, then!" And Chilver spoke with a curious—in fact, a slightly ambiguous—little renewed sound of superiority.

"Yes," his friend ruefully returned, "but not, you see, for six months."

"Oh, I see! I see! Chilver thoughtfully repeated. "So you've got to wait—which I admit perfectly that you must find rather a bore. Yet if *she's* willing," he went on with more cheer and as if still seeking a justification of his original judgment—"if *she's* willing, you see, I wasn't so much out."

Bertram Braddle demurred. "But she isn't willing."

His interlocutor stared. "I thought you said she proposed it."

"Proposed what?"

"Why the six-months' wait—to make sure of you."

"Ah, but she'll *be* sure of me, after she has married me. The delay she asks for is not for our marriage," Braddle explained, "but only—from the date of our marriage—for the information."

"A-ah!" Chilver murmured, as if only now with a full view. "She means she'll speak when you *are* married."

"When we are. And then only on a great condition."

"How great?"

"Well, that if after the six months I still want it very much. She argues, you know, that I *shan't* want it."

"You won't then—you won't!" cried Chilver with a laugh at the odd word and passing his arm into his friend's to make him walk again. They talked and they talked; Chilver kept his companion's arm and they quite had the matter out.

"What's that, you know," Braddle asked, "but a way to get off altogether?"

"You mean for you to get off from knowing?"

"Ah no, for *her*——"

"To get off from telling? It *is* that, rather, of course," Chilver conceded. "But why shouldn't she get off—if you should be ready to let her?"

"Oh, but if I shouldn't be?" Braddle broke in.

"Why then, if she promises, she'll tell you."

"Yes, but by that time the knot will be tight."

"And what difference will that make if you don't mind? She argues, as you say, that after that amount of marriage, of experience of her, you won't care——!"

"What she does tell me may *be?*" Braddle smoked a moment in silence. "But suppose it should be one of those things——" He dropped again.

"Well, what things?"

"That a man can't like in *any* state of satisfaction."

"I don't know what things you mean."

"Come, I say—you do! Suppose it should be something really awful."

"Well, her calculation is that, awful or not," Chilver said, "she'll have sufficiently attached you to make you willing either totally to forego her disclosure or else easily to bear it."

"Oh, I know her calculation—which is very charming as well as very clever and very brave. But my danger——"

"Oh, you think too much of your danger!"

Braddle stopped short. "*You* don't!"

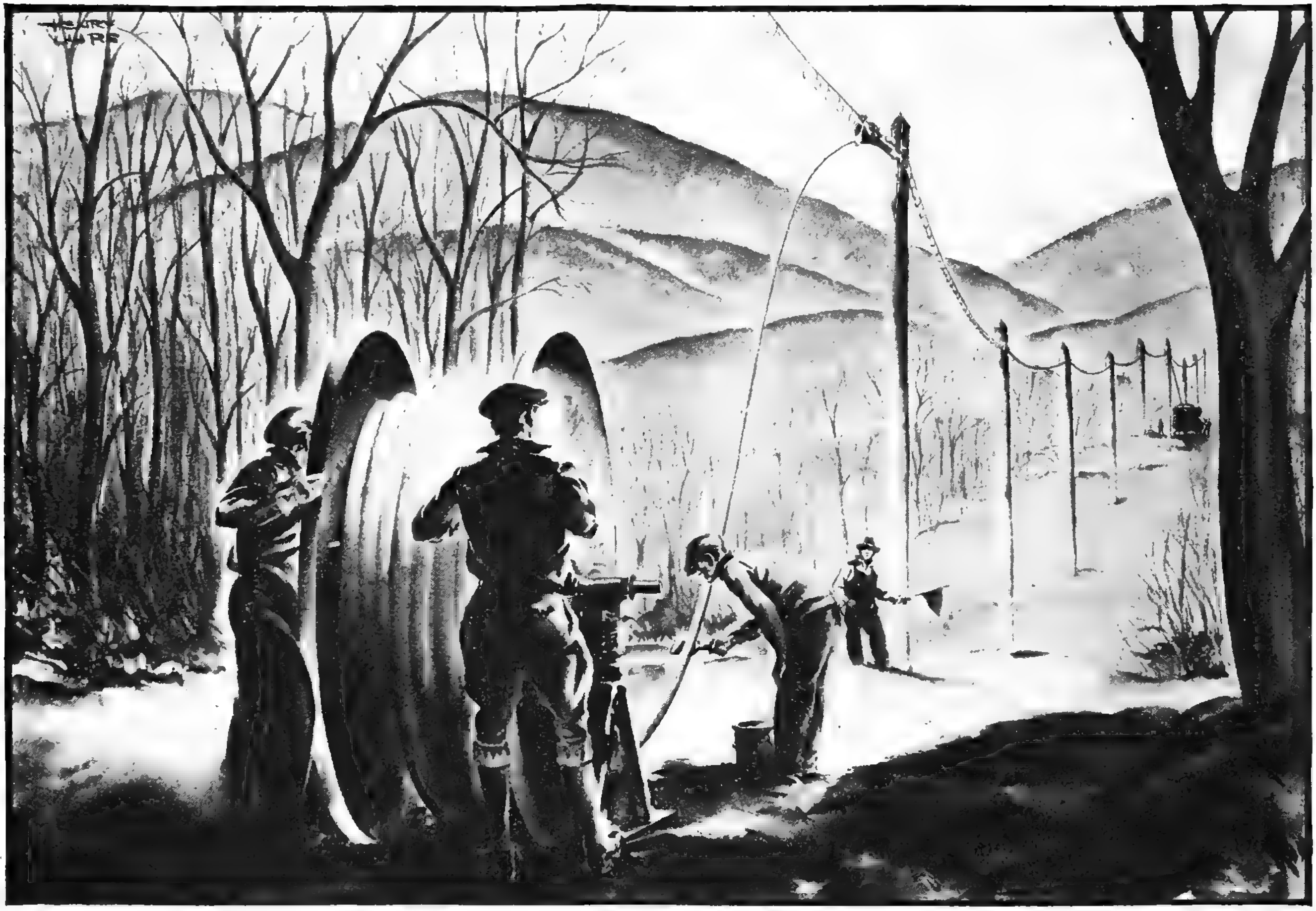
Chilver, however, who had coloured, spent much of the rest of the time they remained together in assuring him that he allowed this element all its weight. Only he came back at the last to what, practically, he had come back to in their other talks. "I don't quite see why she doesn't strike you as worth *any* risk."

"Do you mean that that's the way she strikes you?"

"Oh, I've not to tell you at this time of day," said Chilver, "how well I think of her."

His companion was now seated on a bench from which he himself had shortly before risen. "Ah, but I don't suppose you pretend to know her."

"No—certainly not, I admit. But I don't see how *you* should either, if you come to that."



BIG AND LITTLE, RICH AND POOR, CAN PROJECT THEIR PERSONALITIES OVER THE WIDE NETWORK OF ITS WIRES

In the service of all the people

An Advertisement of the
American Telephone and Telegraph Company

THE Bell System is owned by 450,000 stockholders and operated by more than 400,000 workers for the service of the people of the nation.

It is a democratic instrument of a democracy. Big and little, rich and poor, can project their personalities over the wide network of its wires. For friendship or business, pleasure or profit, the telephone is indispensable to our modern civilization.

This year the Bell System is erecting new telephone buildings in more than 200 cities. It is putting in thousands of miles of cable, thousands of sections of switchboard and hundreds of thousands of new telephones. Its expenditure for plant and improvements in service in 1929 will be more than 550 millions of dollars—half again as much as it cost to build the Panama Canal.

This program is part of the telephone ideal that anyone, anywhere, shall be able to talk quickly and at reasonable cost with anyone, anywhere else. There is no standing still in the Bell System.

"I don't; but it's exactly what I'm trying for, confound it! Besides," Braddle pursued, "she doesn't put you the great condition."

Chilver took a few steps away; then as he came back, "No; she doesn't!"

"Wait till some woman does," Braddle went on. "Then you'll see how you feel under it—then you can talk. If I weren't so infernally fond of her," he gloomily added, "I wouldn't mind."

"Wouldn't mind what?"

"Why, what she has done."

"Oh!" Chilver vaguely ejaculated.

"And I only mind now to the extent of wanting to know." On which Braddle rose from his seat with a heavy sigh. "Hang it, I've got to know, you know!" he declared as they walked on together.

HENRY CHILVER learned, however, in the course of time that he had won no victory on this, after all, rather reasonable ground—learned it from Mrs. Damerel herself, who came up to town in the spring and established herself in the neighbourhood of Kensington Square, in modest but decent quarters, where her late suitor's best friend went to pay her his respects. The great condition had, as each party saw it, been fruitlessly maintained, for neither had, under whatever pressure, found a way to give in. The most remarkable thing of all was that Chilver should so rapidly have become aware of owing his acquaintance with these facts directly to Mrs. Damerel. He had, for that matter, on the occasion of his very first call, an impression strangely new to him—the consciousness that they had already touched each other much more than any contact between them explained. They met in the air of a common knowledge, so that when, for instance, almost immediately, without precautions or approaches, she said of Bertram Braddle: "He has gone off—heaven knows where!—to find out about me," he was not in the least struck with the length of the jump. He was instantly sensible, on the contrary, of the greatest pleasure in showing by his reply that he needed no explanation. "And do you think he'll succeed?"

"I don't know. He's so clever."

This, it seemed to Henry Chilver, was a wonderful speech, and he sat there and candidly admired her for it. There were all sorts of things in it—faint, gentle ironies and humilities, and above all the fact that the description was by no means exact. Poor Braddle was not, for such a measure as hers, clever, or markedly wouldn't be for such an undertaking. The words completely, on the part of the woman who might be supposed to have had a kindness for him, gave him away; but surely that was, in the face of his attitude, a mild revenge. It seemed to Chilver that until, in her little makeshift suburban drawing-room, he found himself alone with Mrs. Damerel he himself had not effectively judged this position. He saw it now sharply, supremely, as the only one that had been possible to his friend, but finer still was the general state of perception, quickened to a liberal intensity, that made him so see it. He couldn't have expressed the case otherwise than by saying that poor Braddle had had to be right to be so ridiculously wrong. There might well have been, it appeared, in Mrs. Damerel's past a missing link or two; but what was the very office of such a fact—when taken with other facts not a bit less vivid—but to give one a splendid chance to show a confidence? Not the confidence that, as one could only put it to one's self, there had not been anything, but the confidence that, whatever there had been, one wouldn't find that one couldn't—for the sake of the rest—swallow it.

This was at bottom the great result of the first stages of Chilver's now independent, as he felt it to be, acquaintance with Mrs. Damerel—a sudden view of any, of every, dim passage, that was more than a tender acceptance of the particular obscurity, that partook really of the nature of affirmation and insistence. It all made her, with everything that for her advantage happened to help it on, extraordinarily touching to him, clothed her in the beauty of her general admission and her general appeal. Were not this admission and this appeal enough, and could anything be imagined more ponderously clumsy, more tactless and even truculent, than to want to gouge out the bleeding details? The charming woman was, to Chilver's view, about of his own age—not altogether so young, therefore, as Braddle, which was doubtless a note, too, in the latter's embarrassment—and that evidently did give time for a certain quantity of more or less trying, of really complicating experience. There it practically was, this experience, in the character of her delicacy, in her kindly, witty, sensitive face, worn fine, too fine, perhaps, but only to its increase of expression. She was neither a young fool nor an old one, assuredly; but if the intenser acquaintance with life had made the object of one's affection neither false nor hard, how could one, on the whole, since the story might be so interesting, wish it away? Mrs. Damerel's admission was so much evidence of her truth and her appeal so much evidence of her softness. She might easily have hated them both for guessing. She was at all events just faded enough to match the small assortment of Chilver's fatigued illusions—those that he had still, for occasions, in somewhat skeptical use, but that had lost their original violence of colour.

The second time he saw her alone he came back to what she had told him of Bertram Braddle. "If he should succeed—as to what you spoke of, wherever he has gone—would your engagement come on again?"

Mrs. Damerel hesitated, but she smiled. "Do you mean whether he'll be likely to wish it?"

"No," said Chilver, with something of a blush; "I mean whether you'll be."

She still smiled. "Dear, no. I consider, you know, that I gave him his chance."

"That you seem to me certainly to have done. Everything between you, then, as I understand it, is at an end?"

"It's very good of you," said Mrs. Damerel, "to desire so much to understand it. But I never give," she laughed, "but one chance!"

Chilver met her as he could. "You evidently can't have given anyone very many!"

"Oh, you know," she replied, "I don't in the least regard it as a matter of course that, many or few, they should be eagerly seized. Mr. Braddle has only behaved as almost any man in his situation would have done."

Chilver at first, on this, only lost himself a while. "Yes, almost any man. I don't consider that the smallest blame attaches to him."

"It would be too monstrous."

Again he was briefly silent, but he had his inspiration. "Yes, let us speak of him gently." Then he added: "You've answered me enough. You're free."

"Free indeed is what I feel," she replied with her light irony, "when I talk to you with this extraordinary frankness."

"Ah, the frankness is mine! It comes from the fact that from the first, through Braddle, I knew. And you knew I knew. And I knew that too. It has made something between us."

"It might have made something rather different from this," said Mrs. Damerel.

He wondered an instant. "Different from my sitting here so intimately with you?"

"I mightn't have been able to bear that. I might have hated the sight of you."

"Ah, that would have been only," said Chilver, "if you had really liked me!"

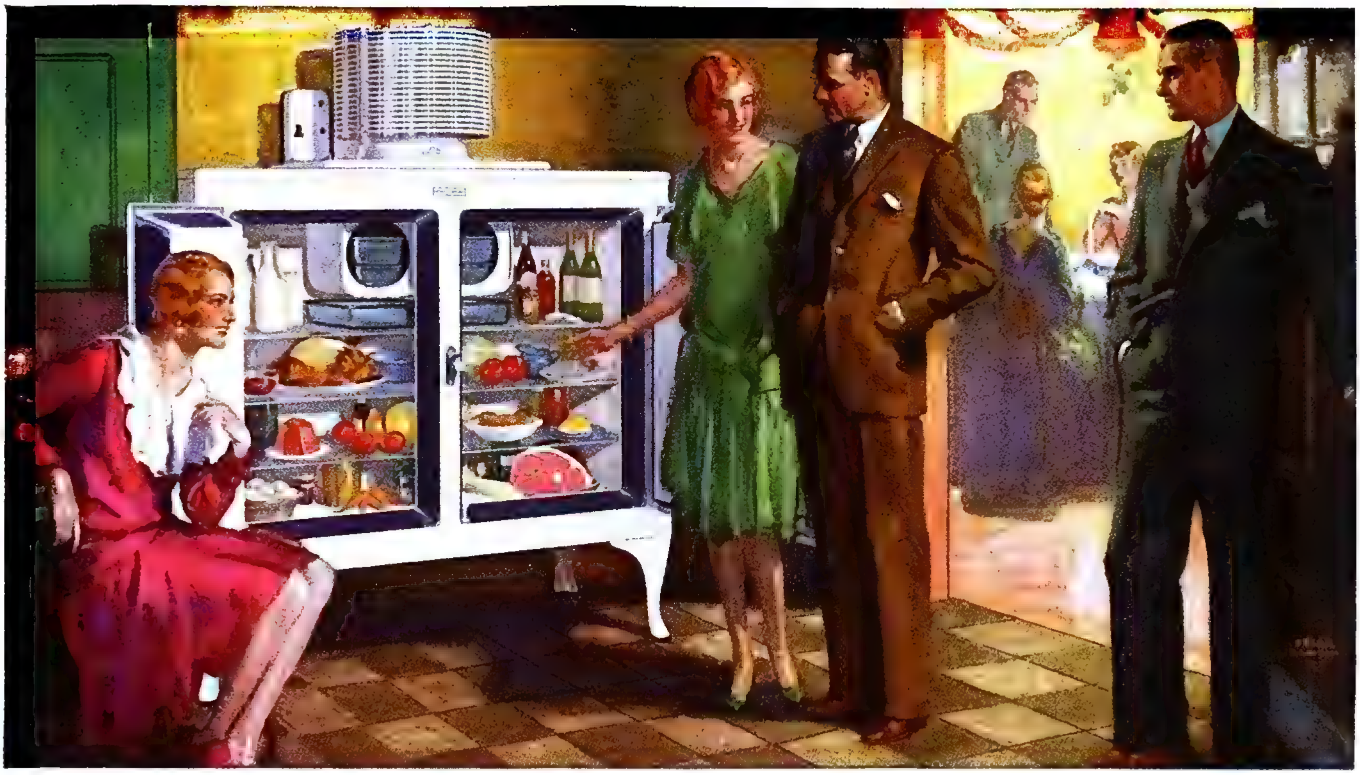
She matched quickly enough the spirit of this. "Oh, but it wasn't so easy to like you little enough!"

"Little enough to endure me? Well, thank heaven, at any rate, we've found a sort of way!" Then he went on with real sincerity: "I feel as if our friend had tremendously helped me. Oh, how easily I want to let him down! There it is."

She breathed, after a moment, her assent in a sigh. "There it is!"

There indeed it was for several days during which this sigh frequently came back to him as a note of patience, of dignity in helpless submission, penetrating beyond any that had ever reached him. She had been put completely in his power, her good name handed over to him, by no act of her own, and in all her manner in presence of the awkward fact there was something that blinked it as

(*Continued on page* 119)



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Really, you can't blame her. Who wouldn't drag her friends out into the kitchen to show off her new General Electric? There it stands, gleaming white, strong as a safe, incredibly quiet . . . the envy of all who see it.

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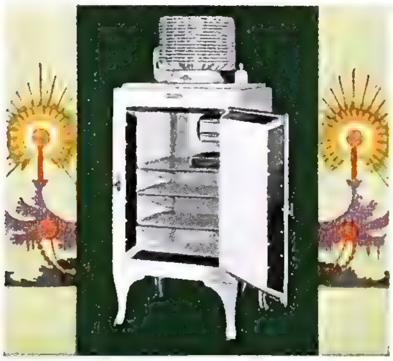

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For complete information about all the models, write to Electric Refrigeration Department of General Electric Company, Hanna Building, Cleveland, Ohio. Ask for Booklet Y-12.

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ALL-STEEL REFRIGERATOR

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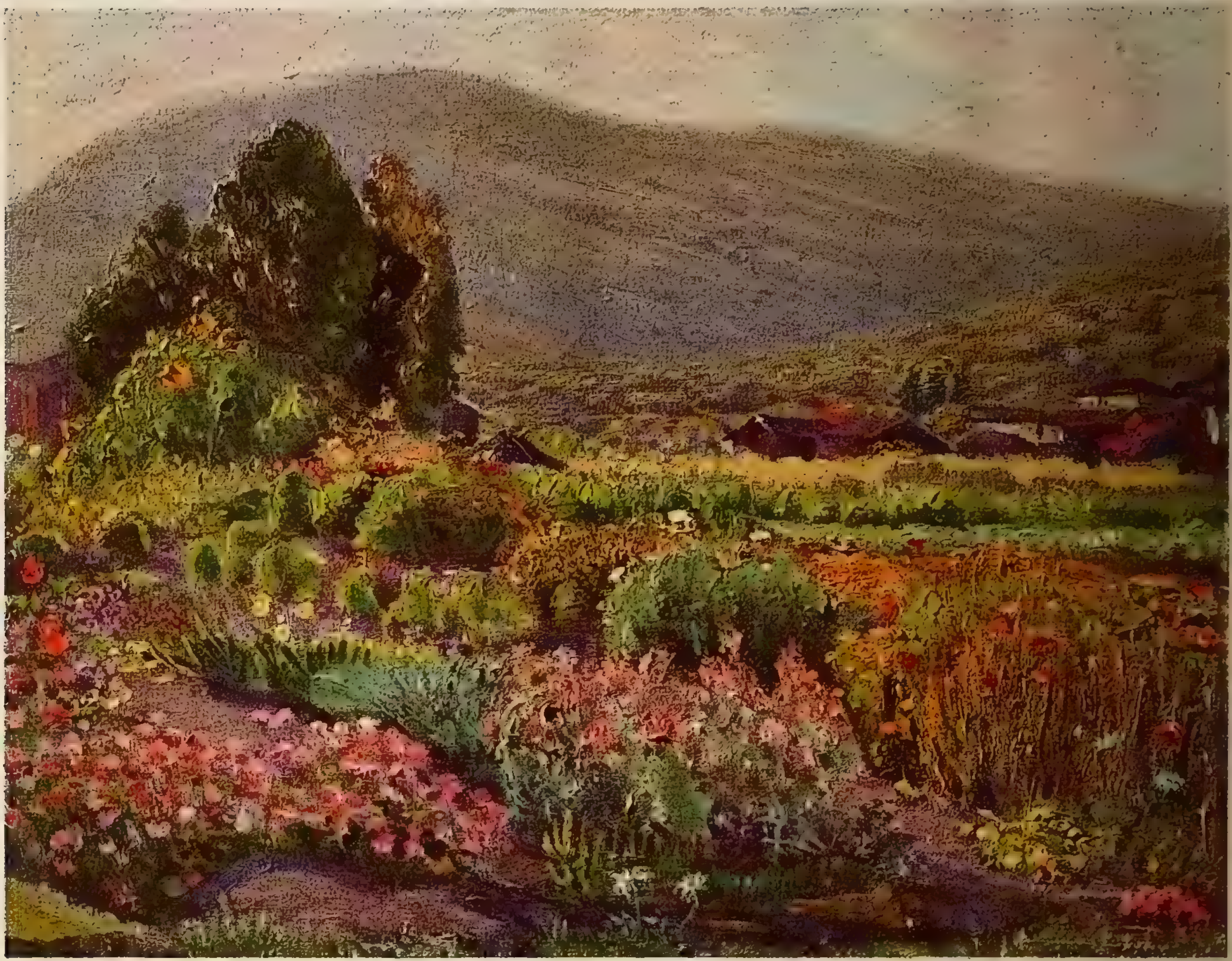

Southern California floral landscape—Painted by Joseph Kleitsch—Courtesy Stendahl Galleries ©1929 A-Y.C.

YOU will look through sunny orange groves at snow-clad mountains . . . you will enjoy scenic drives on the edge of the sea . . . you will find an old world lure in the crumbling Spanish Missions . . . you will see famous personages of the movies on the streets, in the shops and great hotels . . . you will play golf on emerald green courses framed in a verdant landscape. You will derive new energy from the warm, mellow sunshine of mid-day . . . the clear crisp nights, when the wood fire crackles on the hearth . . . and you will get an added thrill from the beauty of Southern California's winter flowers.

For Christmas finds the Poinsettias in blossom . . . those fiery stars of intense vermilion. You will see them growing in yards . . . gardens . . . anywhere. Sweet peas in their pastel shades are lovely too and a trellis of well grown "Mary Pickfords" is worth anyone's attention. Roses, though not prolific as in spring and fall . . . are showing what they can do in the way of specimen blooms . . . and pansies . . . violas . . . verbenas snapdragons . . . stocks . . . calendulas . . . carnations . . . and many other garden favorites are adding to the symphony of color.

January and February furnish their quota of blooms, and in March, not only gardens and "growing fields," but whole hillsides are carpeted with flowers. Even the desert is brilliant with its display of winter blooms.

Come to Southern California early this year . . . come in time to see the "Tournament of Roses" at Pasadena, New Year's Day. And the East-West football classic in the Rose Bowl stadium. Perhaps you've followed this game over the radio when the snow and sleet were beating against the window panes, back home. This year come and sit in the sunshine and see it yourself.

You'll enjoy your vacation in this southland. It is an "all year" resort and your living costs need be no more than they are at home. The children can be entered in the fine schools without losing grades and can have a glorious, healthful winter.

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Five *exclusive features will identify Noma outfits for you. They assure sturdiest, brightest, most adaptable color lighting for Christmas decorations.*

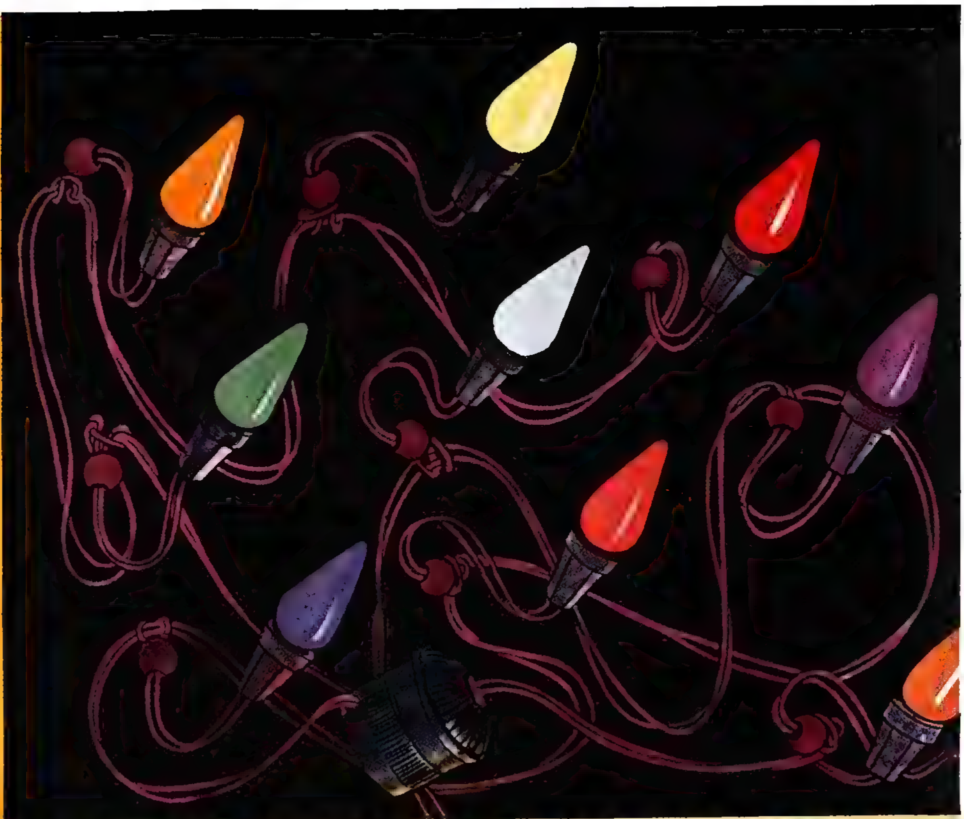
This extension connector permits every Noma series Color-Light outfit to be strung on to another set, simply by plugging in, to produce a long, beautiful, continuous string. You can use up to eight series sets together.

Every Noma series Color-Light is equipped with a handy red bead to attach to the Christmas tree, so that each small, cheerful lamp will stand upright like a tiny fairy candle.

Every Noma Color-Light socket is made of durable, weather-proof, patented, octagon-shaped Bakelite, in green and maroon coloring.

Every Noma Color-Light outfit bears the identifying Noma mark. Look for it on the base of the socket when buying Strings of Color-Light.

Every Noma Color-Light outfit contains genuine Mazda lamps, guaranteeing long service, sparkling light and low current cost. Be sure you find the Mazda name plainly marked on every lamp.



The Noma Color-Light Outfit illustrated above is No. 115, a Series Outfit with the Extension Connector, Mazda lamps, octagon-shaped Bakelite sockets, the cheery little red bead attachment feature, and rubber-covered wire for outdoor use as well as indoor. If your dealer cannot supply you, we shall be glad to.

Dependable Beauty is built into **Noma** *Christmas Tree Lights*

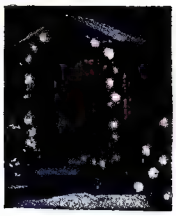
Noma Color-Lights are brilliant and sparkling. The new red bead holds each lamp upright like a fairy candle on its evergreen twig. Each Noma string is an extension outfit—it can be joined to any other Noma string, merely by plugging in. Made into chains of sparkling beauty, these extension outfits lend color magic to your Christmas decorations—indoors and out.

Quality is built into Noma outfits. They are designed for use with Mazda decorative lamps, and only Mazda lamps are furnished with them.

Conserve Noma Quality with Mazda Lamps

For lamp replacements be sure to get Mazda lamps—marked with the name Mazda. Thus you will be sure of most dependable service from your Noma Color-Lights. An unbranded lamp of incorrect voltage and amperage may burn out your set. Don't be misled because it looks like a Mazda lamp. It is not safe to accept substitutes. Insist on Mazda.

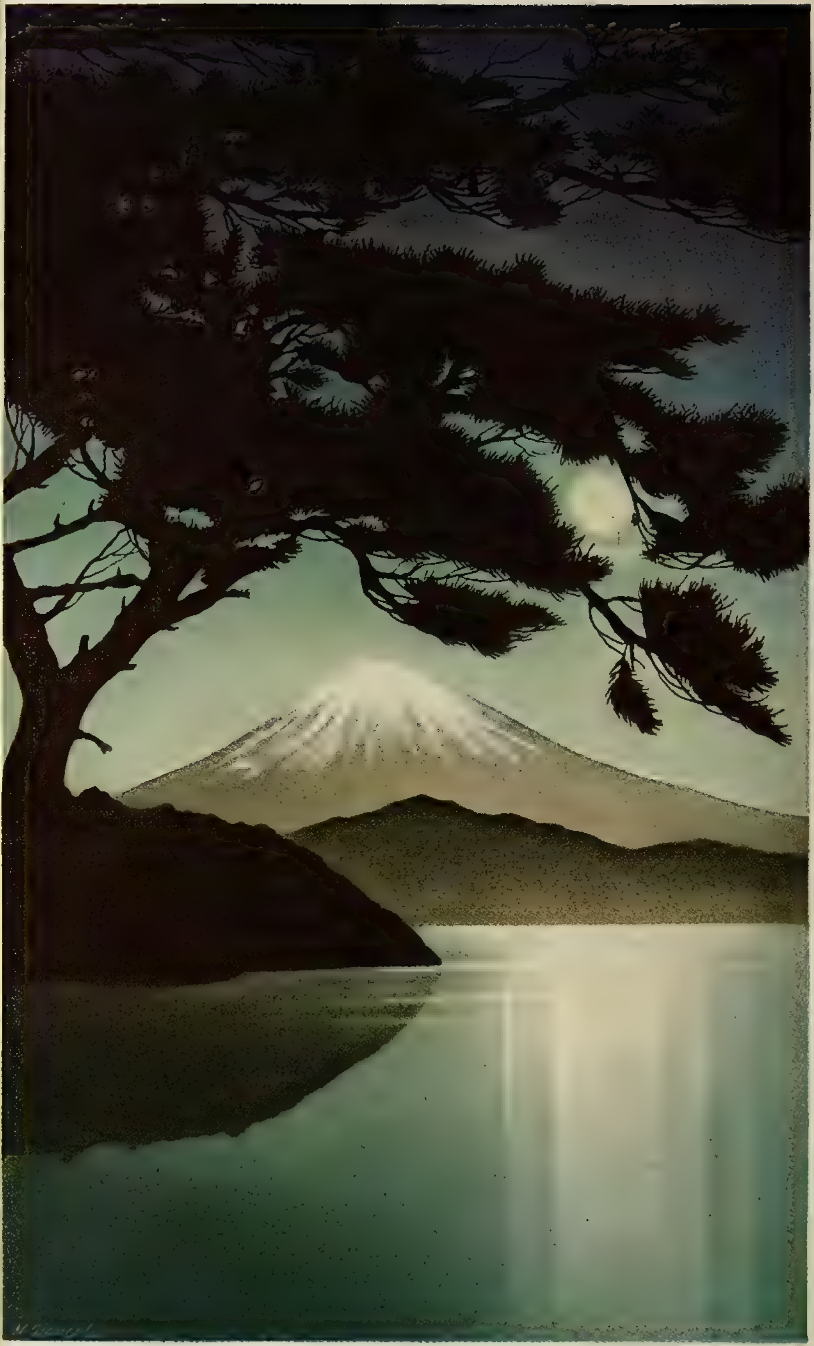
Ask your dealer to show you Noma Color-Lights for indoor and outdoor; constantly lighted sets or off-and-on sets; Noma Christmas wreaths and Noma Christmas stars. They are sold in electrical, hardware, toy and department stores. (And remember, please, to insist on Mazda lamps for replacements.)



Send 10 cents for the fascinating booklet "Decorating with Color-Light—54 Plans for 'Parties They'll Remember'," with many suggestions for Christmas decorations. Noma Electric Corporation, 340 Hudson Street, New York City.

Noma
STRINGS OF COLOR
lights

JAPAN CALLS



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The Great Condition

(*Continued from page* 114)

little as it braved it. He wondered so hard, with this, why, even after the talk I have just reported, they were each not more embarrassed, that it could only take him a tolerably short time to discover the reason. If there was something between them it had been between them, in silence and distance, from the first, from even before the moment when his friend, on the ship, by the favour of better opportunity, had tumbled in deep and temporarily blocked, as it were, the passage. Braddle was good-looking, good-humoured, well-connected, rich; and how could she have known of the impression of the man in the background any more than the man in the background could have known of hers? If she had accepted Braddle hadn't it been just to build out, in her situation, at a stroke, the worry of an alternative that was impossible? Of himself she had seen nothing but that he was out of the question, and she had agreed for conscience, for prudence, as a safeguard and a provision, to throw in her lot with a charming, fortunate fellow who was extremely in love. Chilver had, in his meditations, no sooner read these things clear than he had another flash that completed the vision. Hadn't she then, however, having done so much for reason, stood out, with her intended, on the item of the great condition—made great precisely by the insistence of each—exactly because, after all, that left the door open to her imagination, her dream, her hope? Hadn't her idea been to make for Bertram—troubled herself and wavering for the result—a calculated difficulty, a real test? Oh, if there was a test, how *he* was ready to meet it! Henry Chilver's insistence would take a different line from that of his predecessor. He stood at the threshold of the door, left open indeed, so that he had only to walk over. By the end of the week he had proposed.

VI

It was at his club, one day of the following year, that he next came upon his old friend, whom he had believed, turning the matter often round, he should—in time, though the time might be long—inevitably meet again on some ground socially workable. That the time might be long had been indicated by a circumstance that came up again as soon as, fairly face to face, they fell, in spite of everything, to talking together. "Ah, you *will* speak to me, then," said Chilver, "though you don't answer my letters!"

Braddle showed a strange countenance, partly accounted for by the fact that he was brown, seasoned, a trifle battered, and had almost grown thin. But he had still his good monocular scowl, on the strength of which—it was really so much less a threat than a positive appeal from a supersubtle world—any old friend, recognizing it again, would take almost anything from him. Yes, indeed, quite anything, Chilver felt after they had been a few minutes together: he had become so quickly conscious of pity, of all sorts of allowances, and this had already operated as such a quickener of his private happiness. He had immediately proposed that they should look for a quiet corner, and they had found one in the smoking-room, always empty in the middle of the afternoon. Here it seemed to him that Braddle showed him what he himself had escaped. He had escaped being as *he* was—that was it: "as *he* was" was a state that covered now, to Chilver's sense, such vast spaces of exclusion and privation. It wasn't exactly that he was haggard or ill; his case was perhaps even not wholly clear to him, and he had still all the rest of his resources; but he was miserably afloat, and he could only be for Chilver the big, sore, stupid monument of his irretrievable mistake. "Did you write me more than once?" he finally asked.

"No—but once. But I thought it, I'm bound to say, an awfully good letter, and you took no notice of it, you know, whatever. You never returned me a word."

"I know," said Braddle, smoking hard and looking away; "it reached me at Hawaii. It *was,* I dare say, as good a letter as such a letter could be. I remember—I remember: all right; thanks. But I couldn't answer it. I didn't like it, and yet I couldn't trust myself to tell you so in the right way. So I let it alone."

"And we've therefore known nothing whatever about you."

Braddle sat jogging his long foot. "What is it you've wanted to know?"

The question made Chilver feel a little foolish. What *was* it, after all? "Well, what had become of you, and that sort of thing. I supposed," he added, "that you might be feeling as you say, and there was a lot in connection with you, of course I myself felt, for me to think about. I even hesitated a good deal to write to you at all, and I waited, you remember, don't you? till after my marriage. I don't know what your state of mind may be today, but you'll never, my dear chap, get a 'rise' out of me. I bear you no grudge."

His companion, at this, looked at him again. "Do you mean for what I said——?"

"What you said——?"

"About *her.*"

"Oh, no—I mean for the way you've treated us."

"How do you know how I've treated you?" Braddle asked.

"Ah, I only pretend to speak of what I do know! Your not coming near us. You've been in the Sandwich Islands?" Chilver went on after a pause.

"Oh, yes."

"And in California?"

"Yes—all over the place."

"All the while you've been gone?"

"No, after a time I gave it up. I've been round the world—in extraordinary holes."

"And have you come back to England," Chilver asked, "to stay a while?"

"I don't know—I don't know!" his friend replied with some impatience.

They kept it up, but with pauses—pauses during which, as they listened, in the big, stale, empty room, always dreary in the absence of talk and the silence of the billiard-balls just beyond—the loud tick of the clock gave their position almost as much an air of awkward penance as if they had had "lines" to do or were staying after school. Chilver wondered if it would after all practically fail, his desire that they should remain friends. His wife—beautiful creature!—would give every help, so that it would really depend on Braddle himself. It might indeed have been as an issue to the ponderation of some such question on his own part that poor Bertram suddenly exclaimed: "I see you're happy—I can make *that* out!"

He had said it in a way suggesting that it might make with him a difference for the worse, but Chilver answered none the less good-humouredly. "I'm afraid I can't pretend that I'm in the least miserable. But is it impossible you should come and see us?—come and judge, as it were, for yourself?"

Braddle looked graver than ever. "Would it suit your wife?"

"Oh, she's not afraid, I think!" his companion laughed. "You spoke just now," he after a moment continued, "of something that in your absence, in your travels, you 'gave up.' Let me ask you frankly if you meant that you had undertaken inquiries——"

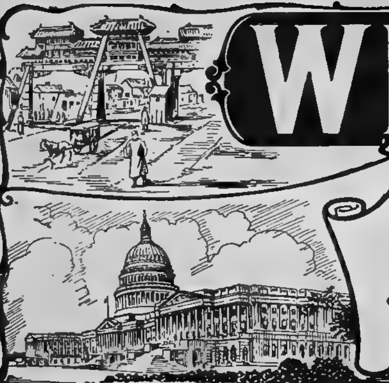
"Yes; I 'nosed around,' as they say out there; I looked about and tried to pick something." Braddle spoke on a drop of his interlocutor, checked evidently by a certain hardness of defiance in his good eyes; but he couldn't know that Chilver wished to draw him out only to be more sorry for him, hesitating simply because of the desire not to put his proceeding to him otherwise than gracefully. "Awfully low-minded, as well as idiotic, I dare say you'll think it—but I'm not prepared to allow that it was not quite my own affair."

"Oh, *she* knew!" said Chilver, comfortably enough.

"Knew I shouldn't find out anything? Well, I didn't. So she was right."

Thus they sat for a moment and seemed to smoke at her infallibility. "Do you mean anything objectionable?" Chilver presently inquired.

"Anything at all. Not a scrap. Not a trace of her passage—not an echo of her



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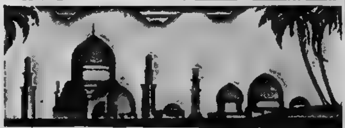

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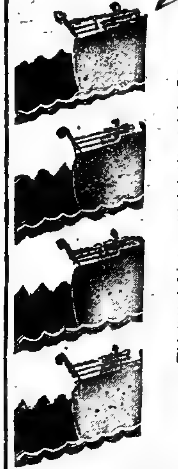

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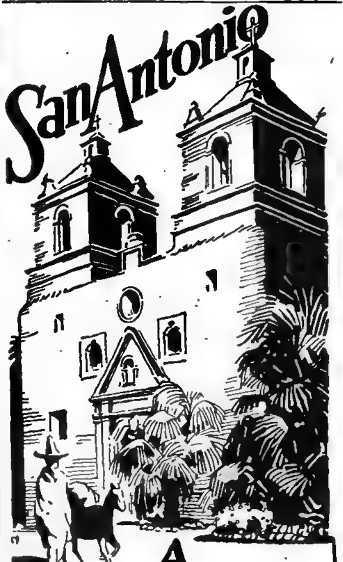

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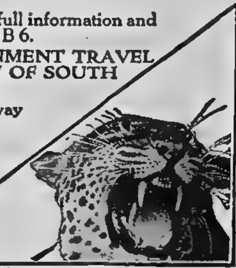

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"No, I wasn't sure."

"Then *she* was."

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His friend hesitated. "Then what *has* she told you?"

"She has told me nothing."

"Nothing?"

"Nothing," said Henry Chilver, smiling as with the enjoyment of his companion's surprise. "But do come and see us," he pursued as Braddle abruptly rose and stood—now with a gravity that was almost portentous—looking down at him.

"I'm horribly nervous. Excuse me. You make me so," the younger man declared after a pause.

Chilver, who with this had got up soothingly and still laughingly, laid a reassuring hand upon him. "Dear old man—take it easy!"

"Thanks about coming to see you," Braddle went on. "I must think of it. Give me time."

"Time? Haven't you had months?"

Braddle turned it over. "Yes; but not on seeing you this way. I'm abominably nervous, at all events. There have been things—my silence among them—which I haven't known how you'd take."

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"Oh, she's naturally pleased at that; but her satisfaction's after all a thing she can keep within bounds; and to see you again can only, I think, remind her more than anything else of what she did lose and now misses: your general situation, your personal advantages, your connections, expectations, magnificence."

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Chilver thought. "Rather late—yes. With pleasure."

His friend presently came back with an expression rather changed. "What I meant just now was what it all makes of my relation and yours—the way we go into it."

"Ah, well, that was extraordinary—the way we went into it—from the first. It was you, permit me to remark," Chilver pleasantly said, "who originally *began* going into it. Since you broke the ice I don't in the least mind its remaining broken."

"Ah, but at that time," Braddle returned, "I didn't know in the least what you were up to."

"And do I now know any more what *you* are? However," Chilver went on, "if you imply that I haven't acted with most scrupulous fairness, we *shall*, my dear fellow, quarrel as much as you please. I pressed you hard for your own interest."

"Oh, my 'interest'!" his companion threw off with another move to some distance; coming back, however, as quickly and before Chilver had time to take this up. "It's all right—I've nothing to say. Your letter was very clever and very handsome." Then, "I'm not 'up to' anything?" Braddle added with simplicity.

The simplicity just renewed his interlocutor's mirth. "In that case why shouldn't we manage?"

"Manage?"

"To make the best, all round, of the situation."

"I've no difficulty whatever," said Braddle, "in doing that. If I'm nervous I'm still much less so than I was before I went away. And as to my having broken off, I feel more and more how impossible it was I should have done anything else."

"I'm sure of it—so we *will* manage."

It was as if this prospect, none the less, was still not clear to Braddle. "Then, as you've so much confidence, I can ask you why—if what you said just now of me is true—she shouldn't have paid for me a price that she was going, after all, to find herself ready to pay for *you*."

"A price? What price?"

"Why, the one we've been talking about. That of waiving her great condition." On which, as Chilver was, a moment—though without embarrassment—silent for this explanation, his interlocutor pursued: "The condition of your waiting——"

"Ah," said Chilver, "it remained. She didn't waive it."

Oh, how Braddle looked at him! "You accepted it?"

Chilver gave a laugh at his friend's stare. "Why are you so surprised when all my urgency to *you* was to accept it and when I thought you were going to?" Bertram had flushed, and he was really astonished. "Hadn't you then known?"

"Your letter didn't say that."

"Oh, I didn't go into our terms."

"No," said Braddle with some severity, "you slurred them over. I know what you urged on me and what you thought I was going to do. *I* thought I was going to do it too. But at the scratch I couldn't."

"So you believed *I* wouldn't?" . . . "You married her *with* it?"

This was a question, however—it was in particular an emphasis—as to the interpretation of which he showed a certain reserve. "With what?"

"Why, damn it, with the condition."

"Oh, yes—with the condition." It sounded, on Chilver's lips, positively gay.

"You waited?"

"I waited."

This answer produced between them for the time—and, as might be said, by its visible effect on the recipient—a hush during which poor Bertram did two or three pointless things: took up an ash-tray that was near them and vaguely examined it, then looked at the clock and at his watch, then again restlessly moved off a few steps and came back. At his watch he gave a second glare. "I say, after all—*don't* come tonight."

"You can't stand me?"

"Well, I don't mind telling you you've rather upset me. It's my abject nerves; but they'll settle down in a few days, and then I'll make you a sign. Good-by."

"Good-by." Chilver held a minute the hand he had put out. "Don't be too long. My secondary effect on you may perhaps be better."

"Oh, it isn't really you. I mean it's *her*."

"Talking about her? Then we'll talk of something else. You'll give me the account——"

"Oh, as I told you, there *was* no account!" Braddle quite artlessly broke in. Chilver laughed out again at this, and his interlocutor went on: "What's the matter is that, though it's none of my business, I can't resist a brutal curiosity—a kind of suspense."

"Suspense?" Chilver echoed with good-humoured deprecation.

"Of course, I do see you're thoroughly happy."

"Thoroughly."

Braddle still waited. "Then it isn't anything——?"

"Anything?"

"To make a row about. I mean what you know."

"But I *don't* know."

"Not yet? She hasn't told you?"

"I haven't asked."

Braddle wondered. "But it's six months."

"It's seven. I've let it pass."

"Pass?" Braddle repeated with a strange sound.

"So would *you* in my place."

"Oh, no, I beg your pardon!" Braddle almost exultantly declared. "But I give you a year."

"That's what *I've* given," said Chilver, serenely.

His companion had a gasp. "Given *her?*"

"I bettered even, in accepting it, the great condition. I allowed her double the time."

Braddle wondered till he turned almost pale. "Then it's because you're afraid."

"To spoil my happiness?"

"Yes—and hers."

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"Ah, well, that was extraordinary—the way we went into it—from the first. It was you, permit me to remark," Chilver pleasantly said, "who originally *began* going into it. Since you broke the ice I don't in the least mind its remaining broken."

"Ah, but at that time," Braddle returned, "I didn't know in the least what you were up to."

"And do I now know any more what *you* are? However," Chilver went on, "if you imply that I haven't acted with most scrupulous fairness, we *shall*, my dear fellow, quarrel as much as you please. I pressed you hard for your own interest."

"Oh, my 'interest'!" his companion threw off with another move to some distance; coming back, however, as quickly and before Chilver had time to take this up. "It's all right—I've nothing to say. Your letter was very clever and very handsome." Then, "I'm not 'up to' anything?" Braddle added with simplicity.

The simplicity just renewed his interlocutor's mirth. "In that case why shouldn't we manage?"

"Manage?"

"To make the best, all round, of the situation."

"I've no difficulty whatever," said Braddle, "in doing that. If I'm nervous I'm still much less so than I was before I went away. And as to my having broken off, I feel more and more how impossible it was I should have done anything else."

"I'm sure of it—so we *will* manage."

It was as if this prospect, none the less, was still not clear to Braddle. "Then, as you've so much confidence, I can ask you why—if what you said just now of me is true—she shouldn't have paid for me a price that she was going, after all, to find herself ready to pay for *you*."

"A price? What price?"

"Why, the one we've been talking about. That of waiving her great condition." On which, as Chilver was, a moment—though without embarrassment—silent for this explanation, his interlocutor pursued: "The condition of your waiting——"

"Ah," said Chilver, "it remained. She didn't waive it."

Oh, how Braddle looked at him! "You accepted it?"

Chilver gave a laugh at his friend's stare. "Why are you so surprised when all my urgency to *you* was to accept it and when I thought you were going to?" Bertram had flushed, and he was really astonished. "Hadn't you then known?"

"Your letter didn't say that."

"Oh, I didn't go into our terms."

"No," said Braddle with some severity, "you slurred them over. I know what you urged on me and what you thought I was going to do. *I* thought I was going to do it too. But at the scratch I couldn't."

"So you believed *I* wouldn't?" . . .

"You married her *with* it?"

This was a question, however—it was in particular an emphasis—as to the interpretation of which he showed a certain reserve. "With what?"

"Why, damn it, with the condition."

"Oh, yes—with the condition." It sounded, on Chilver's lips, positively gay.

"You waited?"

"I waited."

This answer produced between them for the time—and, as might be said, by its visible effect on the recipient—a hush during which poor Bertram did two or three pointless things: took up an ash-tray that was near them and vaguely examined it, then looked at the clock and at his watch, then again restlessly moved off a few steps and came back. At his watch he gave a second glare. "I say, after all—*don't* come tonight."

"You can't stand me?"

"Well, I don't mind telling you you've rather upset me. It's my abject nerves; but they'll settle down in a few days, and then I'll make you a sign. Good-by."

"Good-by." Chilver held a minute the hand he had put out. "Don't be too long. My secondary effect on you may perhaps be better."

"Oh, it isn't really you. I mean it's *her*."

"Talking about her? Then we'll talk of something else. You'll give me the account——"

"Oh, as I told you, there *was* no account!" Braddle quite artlessly broke in. Chilver laughed out again at this, and his interlocutor went on: "What's the matter is that, though it's none of my business, I can't resist a brutal curiosity—a kind of suspense."

"Suspense?" Chilver echoed with good-humoured deprecation.

"Of course, I do see you're thoroughly happy."

"Thoroughly."

Braddle still waited. "Then it isn't anything——?"

"Anything?"

"To make a row about. I mean what you know."

"But I *don't* know."

"Not yet? She hasn't told you?"

"I haven't asked."

Braddle wondered. "But it's six months."

"It's seven. I've let it pass."

"Pass?" Braddle repeated with a strange sound.

"So would *you* in my place."

"Oh, no, I beg your pardon!" Braddle almost exultantly declared. "But I give you a year."

"That's what *I've* given," said Chilver, serenely.

His companion had a gasp. "Given *her?*"

"I bettered even, in accepting it, the great condition. I allowed her double the time."

Braddle wondered till he turned almost pale. "Then it's because you're afraid."

"To spoil my happiness?"

"Yes—and hers."

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"Well, my dear boy," said Chilver, cheerfully, "it may be that."

"Unless," his friend went on, "you're—in the interest of everyone, if you'll permit me the expression?—magnificently lying." Chilver's slow, good-humoured headshake was so clearly, however, the next moment, a sufficient answer to this that the younger man could only add as drily as he might: "You'll know when you want to."

"I shall know, doubtless, when I ask. But I feel at present that I shall never ask."

"Never?"

"Never."

Braddle waited a moment. "Then how the devil shall *I* know?"

Something in the tone of it renewed his companion's laughter. "Have you supposed I'd tell you?"

"Well, you ought to, you know. And—yes—I've believed it."

"But, my good man, I can't ask for *you*."

Braddle turned it over. "Why not, when one thinks of it? You know you owe me something."

"But—good heavens!—what?"

"Well, some kindness. You know, you've all the fun of being awfully sorry for me."

"My dear chap!" Chilver murmured, patting his shoulder. "Well, give me time!" he easily added.

"To the end of your year? I'll come back *then*," said Braddle, going off.

VII

HE CAME BACK punctually enough, and one of the results of it was a talk that, a few weeks later, he had one Sunday afternoon with Mrs. Chilver, whom, till this occasion—though it was not his first visit to the house—he had not yet seen alone. . . .

He appeared struck with this. "Yes. Of course, your living at Hammersmith——"

"We have to live where we can live for tenpence a year." He was silent at this touch, with a silence that, like an exclamation, betrayed a kind of helplessness, and she went on explaining as if positively to assist him. "Besides, we haven't the want. And so few people know us. We're our own company."

"Yes—that's just it. I never saw such a pair. It's as if you did it on purpose. But it was to show you how I feel at last the luxury of seeing you without Chilver."

"Ah, but I can't forbid *him* the door!" she laughed.

He kept his eyes for a minute on that of the room. "Do you mean he *will* come in?"

"Oh, if he does it won't be to hurt you. He's not jealous." . . .

He made an eager movement. "Do you mean that we *can* talk?"

She just visibly hesitated. "He and I only want to be kind to you."

"That's just what's awful!" He fell back again. "It's the way he has kept me on and on. I mean without——" But he had another drop.

"Without what?" . . .

"Do you know what I came back for? —I mean the second time, *this* time?" he asked.

"Why, to see *me*, I've all these days supposed."

"Well," said Braddle with a slight hesitation, "it was, to that extent, to show my confidence."

But she also hesitated. "Your confidence in what? I'm trying to follow you—to understand. I know of your meeting with Henry last year at a club." . . .

"Well, what passed between us then," said Braddle, "is why I came back. He made me, if I should wait, a sort of promise——"

"Oh"—she took him up—"I don't think he was conscious of anything like a promise. He said at least nothing to me of that." With which, as Braddle's face had exceedingly fallen, "But I know what you then wanted and what you still want to know," she added.

"I would rather have had it from *him*," he said at last.

"It would certainly have been more natural," she intelligently returned. "But he has given you no chance to press him again?"

"For pity's sake, *what* is it?" he broke out in a key that now filled the room supremely with the strange soreness of his yearning for his justification.

She kept him waiting, after she had taken this in, but another instant. "You would rather, you say, have had it from *him*——"

"But I must take it as I can get it? Oh, anyhow!" he fairly panted.

"Then with a condition."

It threw him back into a wail that was positively droll. "Another?"

"This one," she dimly smiled, "is comparatively easy. You must promise me with the last solemnity——"

"Yes!"

"On the sacred honour of a gentleman——"

"Yes!"

"To repeat to no one whatever what you now have from me."

Thus completely expressed, the condition checked him but a moment. "Very well!"

"You promise?"

"On the sacred honour of a gentleman."

"Then I invite you to make the inference most directly suggested by the vanity of your researches."

He looked about him. "The inference?"

"As to what a fault may have been that it's impossible to find out."

He got hold as he could. "It may have been hidden."

"Then anything hidden, from so much labour, so well——"

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"May not have existed?" he stammered after she had given him time to take something from her deep eyes. He glared round and round with it—seemed to have it on his hands before the world. "Then what did you mean——?"

"Ah, sir, what did *you*? You invented my past."

"Do you mean you *hadn't* one?"

"None I would have mentioned to you. It was *you* who brought it up."

He appealed, in his stupefaction, to the immensity of the vacancy itself. "There's *nothing?*"

"What did you then so intensely keep back?"

"What did *you,*" she asked as she paused, "so intensely put forward? I kept back what you have from me now."

"*This,*" he gasped from the depths of his collapse, "is what you would have told me?"

"If, as my loyal husband, you had brought it up again. But you wouldn't!"

"And I should have gone on thinking——"

"Yes," she interrupted—"that you were, for *not* bringing it up, the most delicate and most generous of men."

It seemed all to roll over him and sweep him down, but he gave, in his swift passage, a last clutch. "You consent to let *him* think you——?"

"He thinks me what he finds me!" said Mrs. Chilver.

Braddle got up from the sofa, looking about for his hat and stick; but by the time he had reached the door with them he rose again to the surface. "I, too, then, am to leave him his idea——?"

"Well, of what?" she demanded.

"Of your—whatever you called it."

"I called it nothing. You relieved me of the question of the name."

He gloomily shook his head. "You see to what end! Chilver, at any rate," he said, "has his view, and to that extent has a name for it."

"Only to the extent of having the one you gave him."

"Well, what I gave him he took!" Braddle, with returning spirit, declared. "What I suggested—God forgive me!—he believed."

"Yes—that he might make his sacrifice. You speak," said Mrs. Chilver, "of his idea. His sacrifice is his idea. And his idea," she added, "is his happiness."

"His sacrifice of your reputation?"

"Well—to whom?"

"To *me,*" said Bertram Braddle. "Do you expect me now to permit that?"

Mrs. Chilver serenely enough considered. "I shall protect his happiness, which is above all his vision of his own attitude, and I don't see how you can prevent this save by breaking your oath."

"Oh, my oath!" And he prolonged the groan of his resentment.

It evidently—what he felt—made her sorry for him, and she spoke in all kindness. "It's only your punishment!" she sighed after him as he departed.

Travel News:

View of London

The New World Traveler in Old England

By ALEXANDER VAN SANTVOORD

"He possessed eighty-five dollars and a desire to browse about Arthurian England for a few weeks," writes Charles Lowe Swift, in *Independent Education,* of a former preparatory school student of his whom he met one day last summer on Broadway. "He had arranged to earn part of his passage on a tramp steamer, was sailing on the following morning, and was a bit annoyed because his suitcase had gone astray. I later learned that he had sailed without it, that he saw his cherished corner of England, and returned with two dollars and fifty-three cents and a fine old edition of Malory!"

But there are other ways to travel, and with other objects in view. It is possible to spend a month away from home and to see many interesting things in England for as little as $500, but it requires careful planning to get the greatest amount of pleasure out of the short time at one's disposal.

London, because of its literary and historical associations, is of interest to every American visitor; and as it is the centre from which he can most easily begin his trips about England he would do well to go to the capital immediately upon landing from the steamer. The central section of the British capital has been so completely modernized that our traveler will hardly realize he is in a foreign city —until he notices that all traffic movement bears to the left, and not (as with us) to the right. But this difference is forgotten as the American visitor learns his way about London and seeks out places of which he has heard all his life—Westminster Abbey, the Houses of Parliament, St. Paul's Cathedral and Wren's countless churches in the city.

But London is not England, and we must hurry on. Shall we take a wonderful train trip north? Then let us leave London by the "Flying Scotsman" after breakfast, passing Huntingdon, Cromwell's home; Harrogate, one of the world's finest spas; York, with its medieval cathedral and city walls, and its market where in Roman times the natives were sold as slaves; Durham, with its cathedral and castle; and then a blue and white sign reading "Scotland—England"; and soon we are in Edinburgh, having come 393 miles in 8¼ hours. A different route is taken by the "Royal Scot," which, skirting the English Lake District, makes the same fast time.

Does Edinburgh, in Princes' Street, or Oxford, in High Street, possess the most beautiful street in the world? No matter; let us enjoy the former now, and we shall visit the latter when we return to England. Let us also walk down the Royal Mile, from the Castle past St. Giles' Cathedral to Holyrood Palace, indissolubly linked with Mary Queen of Scots and Bonnie Prince Charlie.

The Trossachs and the Highlands are easily reached from Edinburgh, as is the English Lake District. Then the way leads back to the Shakespeare country: the stately splendour of Warwick Castle, the romantic ruins of Kenilworth, and the quaint Tudor houses of Stratford-on-Avon. Here is the house where Shakespeare was born, and a mile away through the fields is the cottage of Ann Hathaway. The gardens of both houses are planted with the sweet old-fashioned flowers and herbs of Shakespeare's day. Several years ago the Memorial Theatre, on the banks of the Avon, was burned; but English-speaking people throughout the world have subscribed to a fund to build a new theatre—one where Shakespeare's plays can and will again be fittingly produced.

Some of the most beautiful country in England surrounds the Shakespeare country, and we see bits of it as we go by bus to Oxford. If we are there in term time we shall see many Americans among the students hurrying to lectures, clad in black academic gowns, or rowing on the Thames. We shall see medieval churches and college halls, and also such modern buildings as Rhodes House, the formal opening of which in July was attended by hundreds of old Rhodes scholars from the United States and the British Dominions.

High Street, or the High (as it is commonly called), with its many churches and college buildings, is a strong competitor with Edinburgh's Princes' Street for the title of the most beautiful street in the world. And here, as everywhere in old Oxford, is history; Newman, before he went over to Rome, was an Oxford don and preached in St. Mary's, the university church where Archbishop Cranmer three centuries earlier renounced his recantation before he was burned to death. In the High is the Mitre, a tavern in Chaucer's day and one which is still a hotel.

But all this time we should be traveling: to Chester to see the cathedral, the Rows (quaint gabled houses with arcades), and the city walls, from which Charles I witnessed the defeat of his army. Or to Wessex, the Hardy country, where the traveler can live again with Tess of the D'Urbervilles. Or to north and west Devon, the *Lorna Doone* and *Westward Ho!* country. Or to the country of King Arthur in north Cornwall; but probably we shall not make the trip as did the schoolboy we have mentioned. For we can travel in more comfort by the "Atlantic Coast Express" from London, visiting "dark Tintagel, by the Cornish sea," with its ruins of Arthur's Castle on the cliff and Merlin's Cave opening on the sands below. The railroad station is Camelford, the Camelot of Tennyson. Nearby is Slaughter Bridge, where Arthur fought his last battle, and Dozmary Pool, the scene, tradition says, of the passing of Arthur and the return to the gods of his invincible sword, Excalibur.

INVESTMENT TRENDS

Bulls, Bears and Bonds

Developments in the stock market made history during October, and as the smoke cleared away after those disastrous 12- and 16-million-share days, several outstanding features added emphasis to the situation. One of these, according to one authority, was the general realization of the break of an "over-bulled" market and an almost panicky rush to sell, after an unprecedented period of business expansion, followed by a slight recession. Another emphasized the statements by numerous outstanding financial and business leaders that business conditions generally are fundamentally sound. And still another was the concerted action by six of the largest banking institutions in the country which became operative at a most critical time and served to help relieve the strain of the terrific market break. It also brought home the realization of Roger W. Babson's prediction early in September of a market crash of from 60 to 80 points, and added weight to the counsel of others that "now is a good time to buy bonds."

Some weeks ago Col. Leonard Ayres, vice-president of the Cleveland Trust Company and editor of its business bulletin, had emphasized the "creeping bear" tendency of the market since the first of the year, pointing out that in January 47 per cent. of all the stocks traded on the New York Stock Exchange sold at higher prices at the end of that month than they did at the beginning, while during the same period 35 per cent. declined in price and sold lower at the end than in the opening sessions. The remaining 18 per cent. were quoted in the closing sessions of that month at the same price as in the opening ones. The price movements on this basis for the months up to October, according to the chart reproduced in the bulletin, were as follows: In February, 29 per cent. up, and 54 per cent. down; in March, 24 per cent. up, and 61 per cent. down; in April, 48 per cent. up, and 34 per cent. down; in May, 16 per cent. up, and 72 per cent. down; in June, 56 per cent. up, and 30 per cent. down; in July, 46 per cent. up, and 39 per cent. down; in August, 44 per cent. up, and 39 per cent. down; and in September, 23 per cent. up, and 70 per cent. down.

While the aggregate value of listed issues showed a decrease of $2,594,646,431 during September, as revealed by the New York Stock Exchange on October 1, the declines in October brought an even greater reduction. For example, the New York *Times'* combined average of fifty representative stocks showed a decline of 12.99 for September, while during October there was a recession of 5.64 in the first week, a recovery of 13.17 in the second week, a decline of 17.99 in the third week, and a decline of 26.20 in the fourth week.

Favourable for Bonds

The bond market meanwhile has shown a tendency toward greater activity, with a definite upturn predicted by many authorities. At the gathering of members of the Investment Bankers' Association in Quebec a few weeks ago the belief was expressed that the bond market will come back with the lessening of speculation, and normal interest rates. In direct contrast to the depression of the stock market, trading in bonds became more active and with rising prices. And, according to the New York *Times*, following the market crash of October 24, "a feature of the rising inquiry for bonds has been the demand for straight investment issues. Until very recently new bond issues have failed to meet public demand unless 'sweetened' by a speculative feature such as the attachment of warrants for the purchase of common stock, or a conversion privilege. The recent offering of a banking group of an issue of $32,000,000 of straight investment bonds has been taken to indicate the passing of this phase of the investing public's appetite."

In discussing bond trends, E. M. Zimmerman, economist for A. C. Allyn & Company of New York and Chicago, has pointed out that "there has been a great deal of superficial flub-dub about the new era of economics and finance, and the public's being so stock-minded that bonds are a thing of the past. The general average of people with money to invest is much less stock-minded at the present time than it was at the top of the bull market.

"Prices of fixed income-bearing securities are not governed by the caprices of the buyers and sellers. They are controlled almost wholly by economic laws which are immutable and which cannot be invalidated by any factor of time. They are as valid one year as they are the next. The developments in the money market during the last ten months, instead of disclosing any new laws of credit, basic influences or fundamental factors, have demonstrated that the world of finance is ruled by natural laws."

Mr. Zimmerman pointed to several factors serving to place the bond market in a very strong statistical position. As quoted in the Chicago *Tribune*, "the outstanding one is the falling off from a normal increase in the supply. At the close of 1926 bonds outstanding totalled approximately $40,250,000,000. At the end of 1927 these had increased to more than $44,000,000,000, and in 1928 rose to in excess of $47,000,000,000. New bonds issued since the first of the year up to September 27 aggregated slightly more than $2,550,000,000, compared with about $3,690,000,000, in the same period of 1928, and $4,680,000,000 in the period ended September 30, 1927.

"From the first of the year maturities aggregated $717,288,990 up to September 30; bonds called to October 31 amounted to $656,506,750, or a total of $1,373,795,740. Subtracting these figures from the totals of new issues since the first of the year indicates an increase in supply of slightly more than $1,200,000,000. Comparing this figure with the new issues offered in the first few months of 1927 and 1928 gives an indication of the big falling off from the normal increase."

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Investment Suggestions

Below you will see summaries of booklets issued by reputable banking houses, trust companies, savings banks, brokers and other financial institutions. Strict rules of eligibility are made concerning companies advertising in this magazine. In writing to them please mention the Golden Book.

The following list of booklets may be of interest to you. Choose by number the ones you wish to see, fill out the coupon below and we will be glad to have them sent to you without charge, or you can write the Bankers themselves. Please enclose ten cents if the material of more than one company is desired.

19. A VALUABLE AID TO BANKS AND INVESTORS, a booklet describing how the Department of Economics and Survey serves investors by furnishing investment counsel, free, to individuals and institutions. Offered by A. C. Allyn & Company, 67 W. Monroe Street, Chicago, Ill.

4. COMMONWEALTH YEAR BOOK: An illustrated detailed statement of the operations of the Commonwealth Edison Company, of much interest to investors. Offered by Commonwealth Edison Company, 72 W. Adams St., Chicago, Ill.

5. SERVING A NATION, an illustrated booklet telling about the Cities Service Organization and its fiscal agents. Offered by Henry L. Doherty & Company, 60 Wall Street, New York City.

6. HOW TO SELECT SAFE BONDS, a pamphlet outlining some sound investment principles, offered by George M. Forman & Co., 112 West Adams Street, Chicago, Ill.

7. INVESTORS' GUIDE, a detailed statement of sound investments, is offered by Greenebaum Sons Investment Company, La Salle and Madison Streets, Chicago, Ill.

9. SECURITY BONDS, a name applied to 6% real estate bonds which are guaranteed as to principal and interest by the Maryland Casualty Company, a $40,000,000 corporation, are described in an illustrated booklet. Offered by J. A. W. Iglehart & Co., 102 St. Paul St., Baltimore, Md.

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16. STOCK AND BOND REGISTER. A record showing the important features of each security which is held by investors. Offered by Otis & Company, 216 Superior Street, N. E., Cleveland, Ohio.

14. "INVESTMENTS THAT ENDURE" is the slogan of the Utility Securities Company, 230 So. La Salle St., Chicago, Ill., and is applied to the various securities which are offered by the great public utility interests which the Utility Securities Company serves. Detailed circulars will be mailed upon request.

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portfolios in order to meet the loan requirements of their customers, or have sold in order to place funds in the call money market, Mr. Zimmerman pointed out. He added that "it is reasonable to expect the banks will again build up their investment portfolios as the demand for loans subsides coincident with the decline in volume of trading in the stock market and the temporary recession in business activity." Mr. Zimmerman referred also to the money out on call in Wall Street by corporations, foreign governments and individuals, but "if interest rates remain as low as they have been since the first of October they cannot compete with the return from yield and apparently assured appreciation in bonds. It is therefore not logical to expect this money to remain long in any channel when others offer a more attractive return."

Frequently, drastic declines in stock prices tend to strengthen bond prices, according to Felix M. Farrell, economist of the First National Bank of Detroit, and the liquidation attendant upon such slumps as recently witnessed releases funds that seek other investments. Much of this money finds its way into bonds. As Mr. Farrell pointed out:

"About five years ago, the great majority of investors thought largely in terms of bonds. Since that time this majority has been thinking in terms of equities, with a consequent neglect of the bond market. The present situation will tend to reflect a saner balance between fixed interest-bearing obligations and equities."

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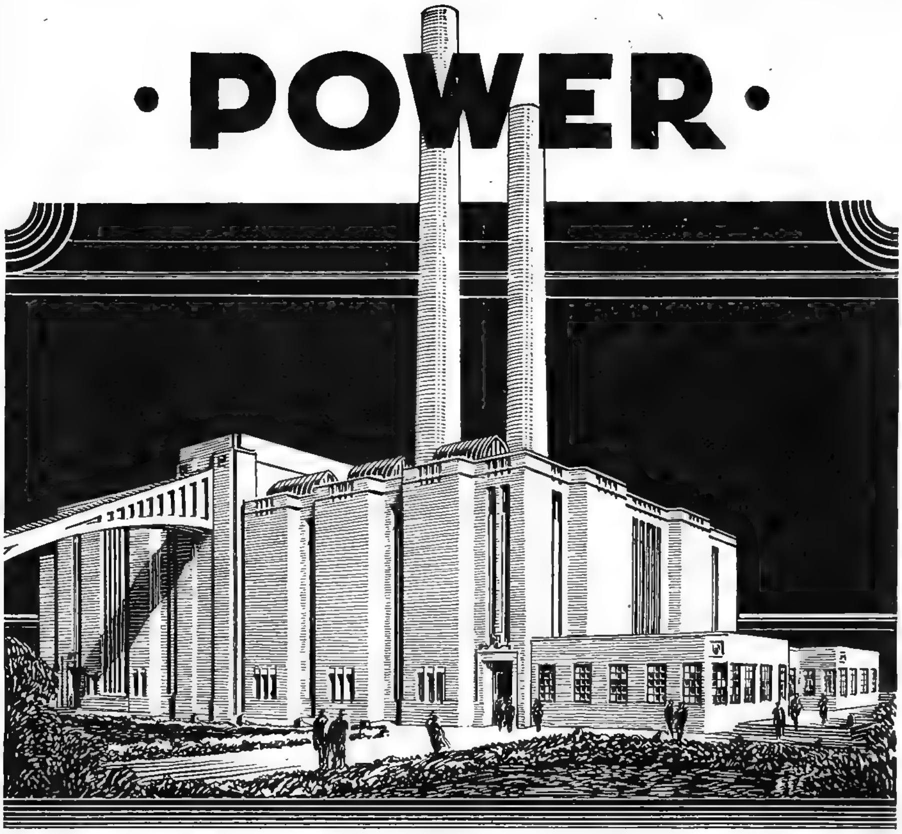
It was pointed out that in case of a severe decline in the securities market the value of the participation may decrease, but "it is obvious that a list of investments selected and watched constantly by men highly trained in that work, always will stand a better chance of producing satisfactory results than the average investment list held by an individual untrained investor." The plan is in no sense an investment trust, and no corporate shares are offered in connection with the service.

The Irving Trust Company's plan follows the announcement of its acquisition of the Investment Managers' Company some weeks ago. This organization has been held intact as a subsidiary under the name of the Irving Investors' Management Company, Inc., to carry on (with the backing of the Irving Trust Company and its facilities) the investment management methods previously employed. With the machinery thus set up, the Irving is now providing separate trusts, which are administered collectively as a well diversified investment fund, with each investor retaining his individual interest—an interest which may be readily withdrawn. There are two investment funds, one for income and one for accumulation, and separate reports of the individual participation are made each year, together with a financial report of the entire fund and a list of the securities held.

The announcements of both of these plans emphasized the world-wide facilities and extensive investment organizations of the companies. And in the case of the City Bank-Farmers' Trust Company it is another step in the National City's chain of popularized services—other examples of which include the widespread retailing organization of its investments affiliate, its New York branch banking development, and its personal loan department, developed a year or so ago, which in 1928 served more than 50,000 small borrowers and incidentally offered these clients a way of escape from the avaricious clutches of dishonest loan brokers.



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Music and Radio

By ALFRED V. FRANKENSTEIN

Somewhere in one of his essays Deems Taylor says that the average American composer is so delighted at having the technique with which to compose a symphonic poem, that he plunges in to make dots on score paper without stopping to consider that a prerequisite to a symphonic poem is an idea. Somewhat of the same delight overcomes the average American musical journalist when called upon to write about American composers. He is so overjoyed at the fact that there *are* American composers, that he does not question whether they are composers worth celebrating in print. So we have histories of American music filled with the names and portraits of bearded nonentities, composers whose music "sounds enough like Sterndale Bennett to have been written by Mendelssohn." Therefore a book on American music by a critic who inquires as to values, without being swayed by chauvinistic considerations, is something of an event.

Its title, simply enough, is *American Music* (Lippincott's *One Hour Series*), and the authority who was commissioned to make this survey of the music of our day and place is Paul Rosenfeld, the most "modernistic" of modern American music critics.

In some ways Rosenfeld is ideally suited to the task. He works with no common pen: he seems to write rather with a stylus of phosphorus and red fire. But Rosenfeld's almost feverish intensity is also his chief fault, for he is never content with anything but genius, and he belabours all who do not measure up to the mark of the truly original and creative. It seems never to have occurred to him that one of the factors in determining the direction of great talents is direction of smaller talents, and that these smaller talents are therefore worth examining.

Rosenfeld begins his discussions of American music with a glance at jazz, and here his dislike of the popular misleads him. For he confuses what the movies and the night clubs have done to jazz with the substance of the thing itself. "Jazz's first blare revives the lure of ready-made elysiums. Sparkling as a soda fountain, the blissful region rises amid its pebbly beats, luxurious, immediate as the dance-floor, apparently no less easily accessible than some smart clothes and a complacent embrace. Merely to let go and to pass in is to attain apotheosis. The saxophone says so, insinuative and enveloping; and reserve and ponderation, discrimination of the identity of things and the conditions shaping us—all indeed making for tensity, discomfort and pathos—suddenly become the folly of the living dead. Smoothness of enamel, gaiety of flowery dresses, airiness of speed are there for the mere taking, or the inconsiderable price of a little willingness, a little cash and snap."

Jazz, in other words, is spineless, passive, static. It reveals no man, and no aspects of the world. It is rather escape from the realities of the world. All this is no doubt true of a great deal of jazz, but it is not true of an equally great portion of it, and it is not a bit true of the primitive original jazz. Compare what Shilkret does to the "St. Louis Blues" to what Ted Lewis does with the same tune. Shilkret makes use of a large orchestral palette in commonplace ways. With him the melody has no more punch than the plot of a collegiate movie. Lewis uses very few instruments, each twisting itself delicately (and in true chamber music style) about Handy's macabre notes.

But of the folk voices of America Rosenfeld has his doubts. His argument, to one reader at least, is not convincing. The Negro spiritual, says Rosenfeld, reflects the faith of the Negro race, and not of the American people. The Appalachian folk songs collected by Cecil Sharp are merely impure versions of English material. But the songs of the Sharp collections, and the spirituals, are not nearly all of American folk song, and a glance should be had at the work of Lomax, Sandburg, Pound, Gordon, Belden, Rickaby, Cox, Handy, Kennedy, and others before deciding that America, as concerns its authentic folk voice, is inarticulate.

From *Der Querschnitt*

The first American composer whom Rosenfeld finds worthy the name is MacDowell. His analysis of MacDowell and his placement of the composer in his setting is a jewel among critical essays. He finds in MacDowell "the manifestation of a force directed toward the medium of music, and still not strong enough—at least not frequently strong enough—to grasp the subject material robustly, and play in the stream of things." And yet there is genuine music in MacDowell's work. "Perhaps it is merely a faint note of sweetness, childlike and impotent in the world, and unbalanced by robust qualities other than voluptuousness. But in all Wagner and Grieg and Chopin there is nothing like it, with its queer romance."

Of the two eminent foreign-born composers among us, Rosenfeld considers only one—Loeffler. He says of Loeffler what others have said of this musical avatar of a combined Jérôme Coignard, Bernard Shaw, and Florian de Puysange, but he says it far more beautifully than anybody else has ever said it before. Rosenfeld on Loeffler is a breath of Loeffler himself, in words instead of tones.

I wonder, though, whether Rosenfeld was entirely justified in excluding from his book the other great foreign-born musician, Bloch? The works produced during Bloch's residence here have had little of the Jewish mark upon them. And these works—the violin sonata, the viola suite, and the piano quintet—are to one hearer at least far finer creations than the Israel symphony or "Schelomo."

Rosenfeld's book goes on to Ornstein and Rudhyar, this last a little-known musician with a vast mystical conception of an American force, and to the League of Composers crowd, Sessions, Thomson, Ruggles, Copland, Harris, and the others. The chapter on the Mexican, Carlos Chavez, conjures up a picture of a Pan-American cultural expression, with Amerindian and Aztec strands. Varese he sees as the tone poet of the cubical and mountainous city, its weight, its search, and its upbuilding.

A great musical art is in formation in the writings of these composers. No less important is the sort of writing Rosenfeld is capable of, and commits to paper. Bloch and Varese are at present the great lights, if my eyes do not see false. But there are others, and one might wish that Rosenfeld had given fuller consideration to some of the lesser fires. Ives, Carpenter, Sowerby and Carillo are not even mentioned. Cowell and Gilbert deserve more respectful attention. But the significant thing is that a great critic has undertaken a subject that heretofore lacked a worthy literary hand, and which has been obscured and left dark because of its proximity and our lack of understanding.

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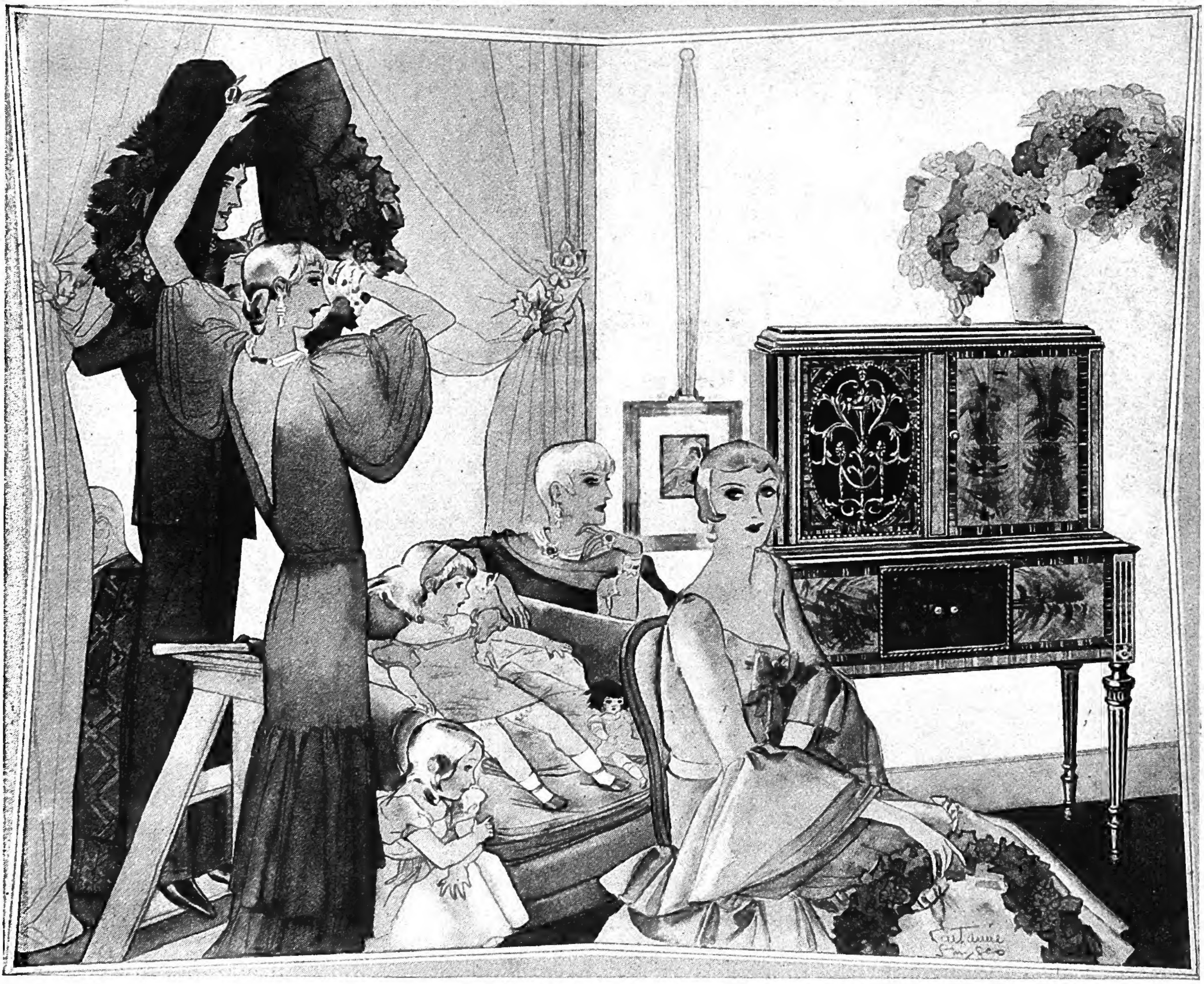

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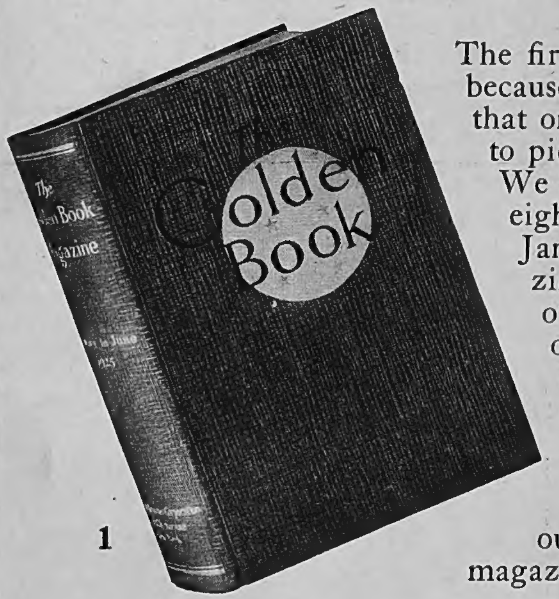

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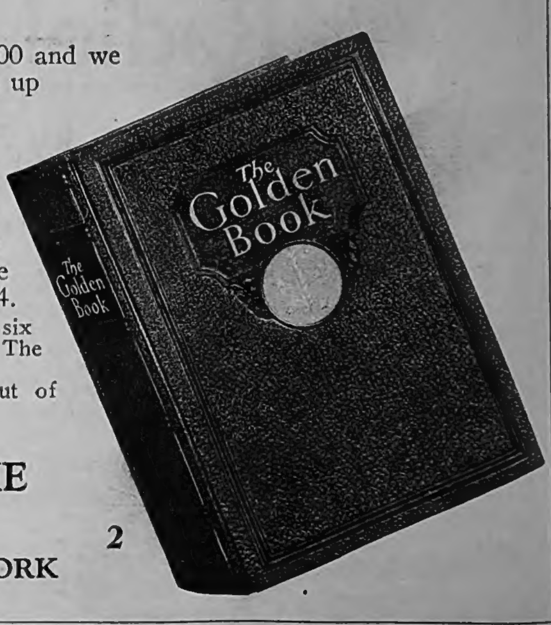

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